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EPIC COLLECTION

MASTER OF KUNG FU

WEAPON OF THE SOUL

VOLUME 1

1973-1975

SPECIAL MARVEL EDITION #15-16, MASTER OF KUNG FU #17-28 & GIANT-SIZE #1-4,
GIANT-SIZE SPIDER-MAN #2 AND IRON MAN ANNUAL #4

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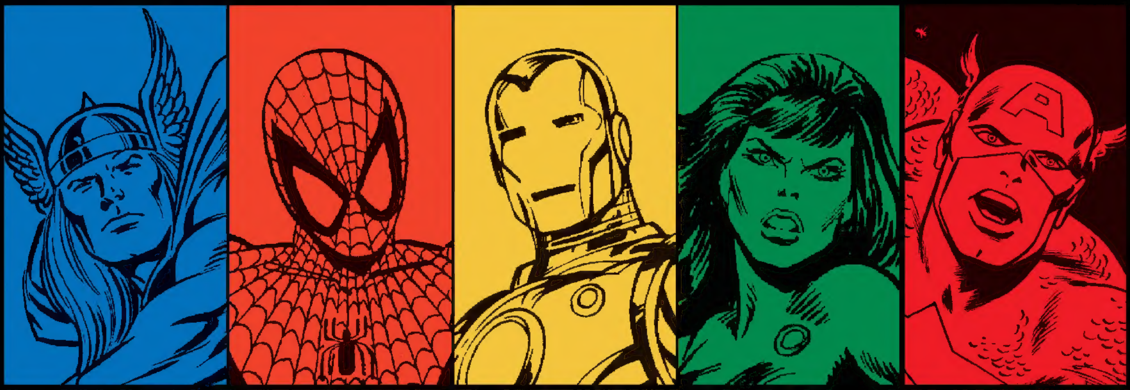

SHANG-CHI, MASTER OF KUNG FU
WEAPON OF THE SOUL

WRITERS:
STEVE ENGLEHART & DOUG MOENCH
WITH **JIM STARLIN, GERRY CONWAY, LEN WEIN & ROGER STERN**

PENCILERS:
JIM STARLIN & PAUL GULACY
WITH **RON WILSON, AL MILGROM, ROSS ANDRU, KEITH POLLARD, ALAN WEISS, WALTER SIMONSON, JOHN BUSCEMA, ED HANNIGAN, AUBREY BRADFORD, P. CRAIG RUSSELL, FRANK McLAUGHLIN & JEFF ACLIN**

INKERS:
AL MILGROM,
SAL TRAPANI
& DAN ADKINS
WITH **KLAUS JANSON,**
FRANK SPRINGER,
MIKE ESPOSITO,
P. CRAIG RUSSELL,
FRANK McLAUGHLIN,
JACK ABEL,
VINCE COLLETTA
& DON NEWTON

LETTERERS:
TOM ORZECHOWSKI,
JOHN COSTANZA
& ART SIMEK
WITH **DAVE HUNT,**
CHARLOTTE JETTER,
JUNE BRAVERMAN,
JEAN SIMEK,
RAY HOLLOWAY,
& HOWARD BENDER

COLORISTS:
PETRA GOLDBERG,
GEORGE ROUSSOS,
BILL MANTLO
& JANICE COHEN
WITH **STEVE ENGLEHART,**
LINDA LESSMANN,
STAN GOLDBERG,
PHIL RACHELSON,
GLYNIS WEIN
& NELSON YOMTOV

EDITORS:
ROY THOMAS
WITH **LEN WEIN**
& ARCHIE GOODWIN

COLLECTION FRONT COVER ART:
JIM STARLIN
& AL MILGROM WITH
COLORS BY **DEAN WHITE**

COLLECTION BACK COVER ART:
JOHN BUSCEMA
& JOE SINNOTT

COLLECTION EDITOR: CORY SEDLMEIER
BOOK DESIGNER: NICKEL DESIGNWORKS
ART & COLOR RESTORATION: MICHAEL KELLEHER & KELLUSTRATION

SVP PRINT, SALES & MARKETING: DAVID GABRIEL
DIGITAL MANAGER/PRODUCTION: TIM SMITH 3 **DIGITAL PRODUCTION:** KOU CHEN & RACHEL YOUNG
EDITOR IN CHIEF: C.B. CEBULSKI **CHIEF CREATIVE OFFICER:** JOE QUESADA
PRESIDENT: DAN BUCKLEY **EXECUTIVE PRODUCER:** ALAN FINE

SPECIAL THANKS: JON B. COOKE, MICHAEL KRONENBERG, RALPH MACCHIO & ROMAIN VERLIER

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"SHANG-CHI, MASTER OF KUNG FU!"

SPECIAL MARVEL EDITION #16, FEB. 1973
"MIDNIGHT BRINGS DARK DEATH!"

MASTER OF KUNG FU #17, APRIL 1974
"LAIR OF THE LOST!"

MASTER OF KUNG FU #18, JUNE 1974
"ATTACK!"

MASTER OF KUNG FU #19, AUG. 1974
"RETREAT"

MASTER OF KUNG FU #20, SEPT. 1974
"WEAPON OF THE SOUL"

MASTER OF KUNG FU #21, OCT. 1974
"SEASON OF VENGEANCE..."

GIANT-SIZE MASTER OF KUNG FU #1, SEPT. 1974
"DEATH MASQUE!"
"FROZEN PAST, SHATTERED MEMORIES"
"SHAOLIN TEMPLE BOXING"
"REFLECTIONS IN A RIPPLED POOL!"

GIANT-SIZE SPIDER-MAN #2, OCT. 1974
"MASTERSTROKE!"

MASTER OF KUNG FU #22, NOV. 1974
"A FORTUNE OF DEATH!"

GIANT-SIZE MASTER OF KUNG FU #2, DEC. 1974
"THE DEVIL-DOCTOR'S TRIUMPH"

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"RIVER OF DEATH!"

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"MASSACRE ALONG THE AMAZON!"

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"RITES OF COURAGE, FISTS OF DEATH!"

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"FIRES OF REBIRTH"

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"DAUGHTER OF DARKNESS!"

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"CONFRONTATION"

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"A SMALL SPIRIT SLOWLY SHAPED..."

GIANT-SIZE MASTER OF KUNG FU #4, JUNE 1975
"WHY A TIGER-CLAW?!"

IRON MAN ANNUAL #4, 1977
"DEATH LAIR!"

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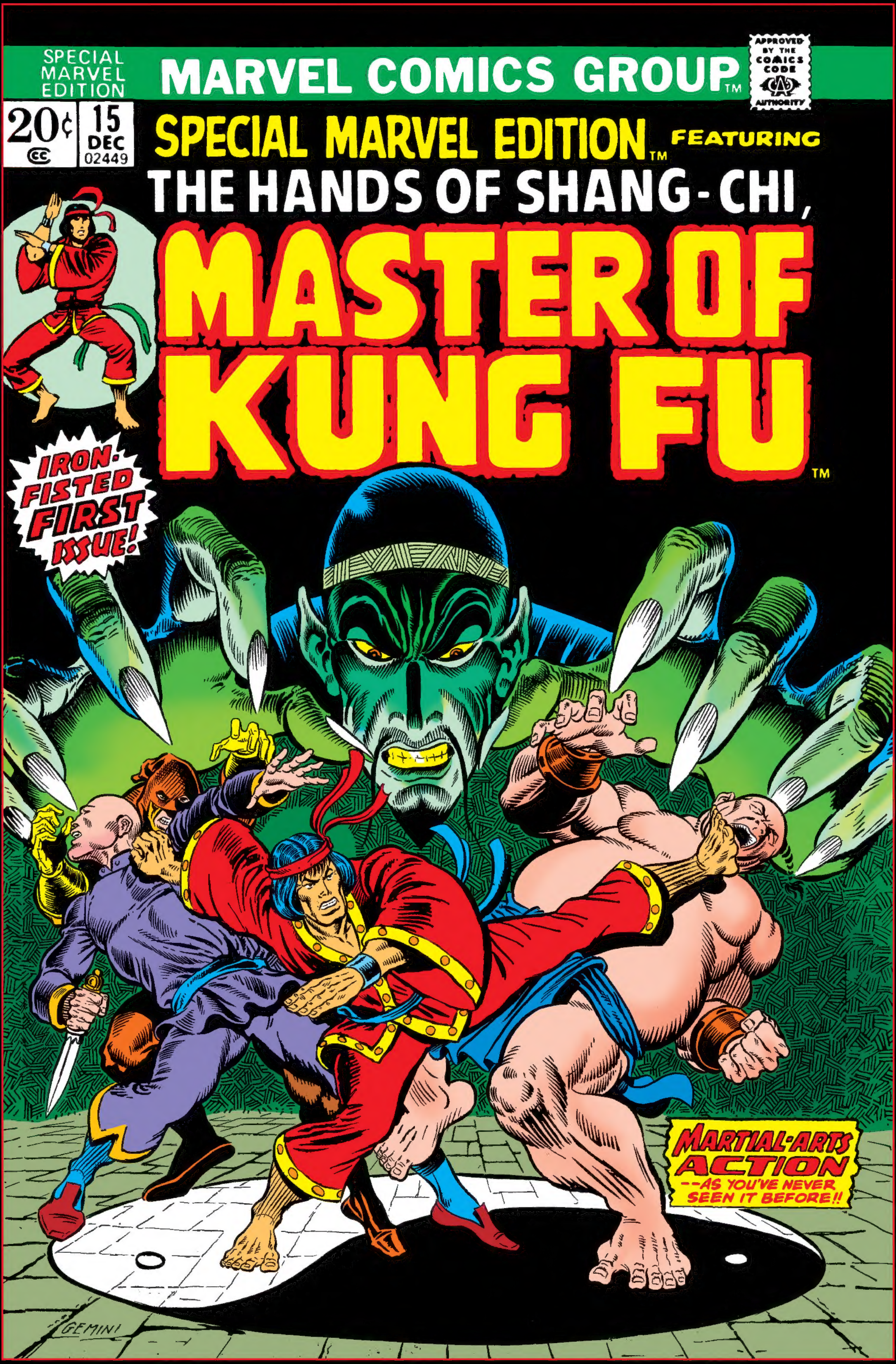
SPECIAL MARVEL EDITION
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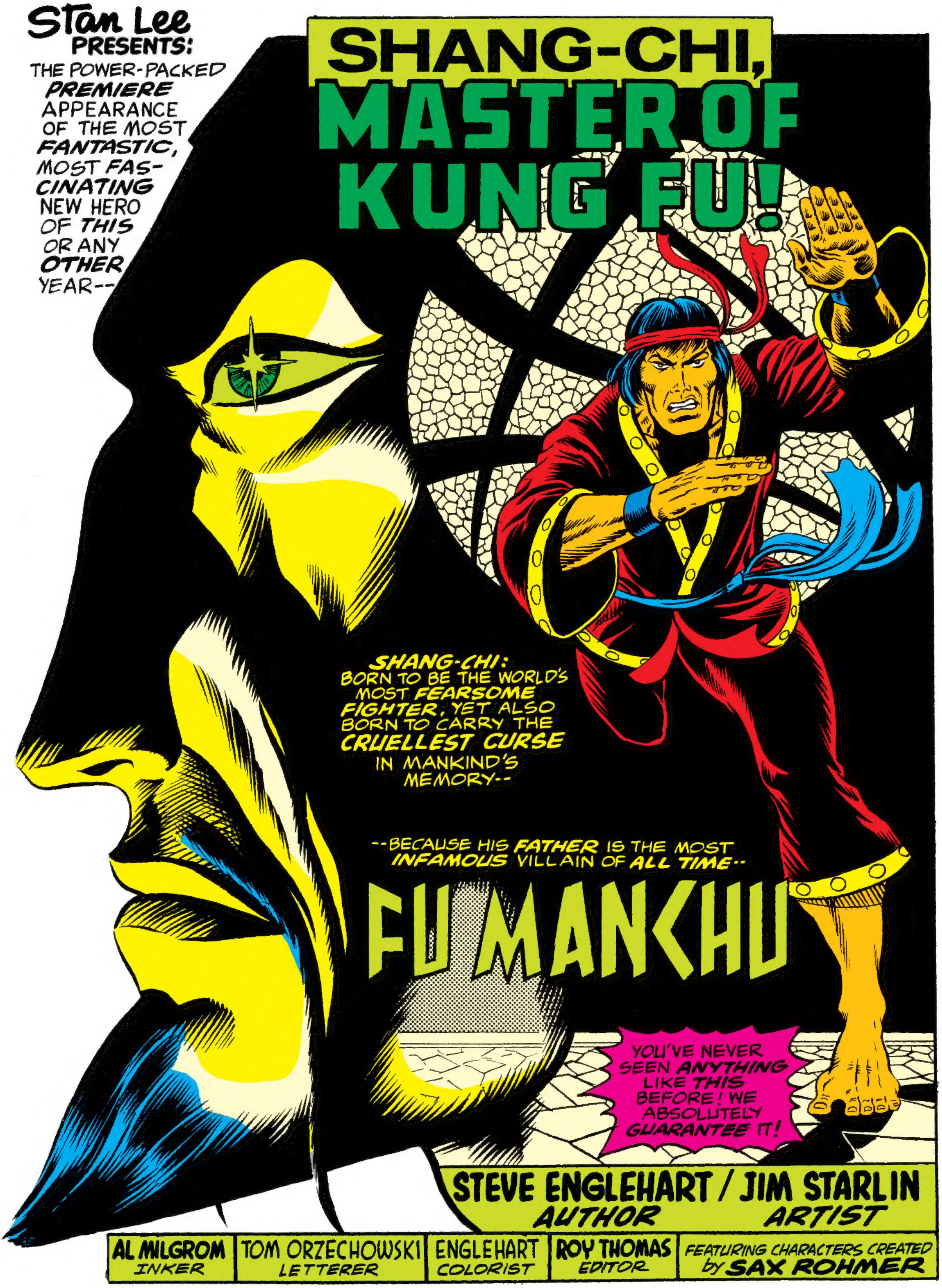
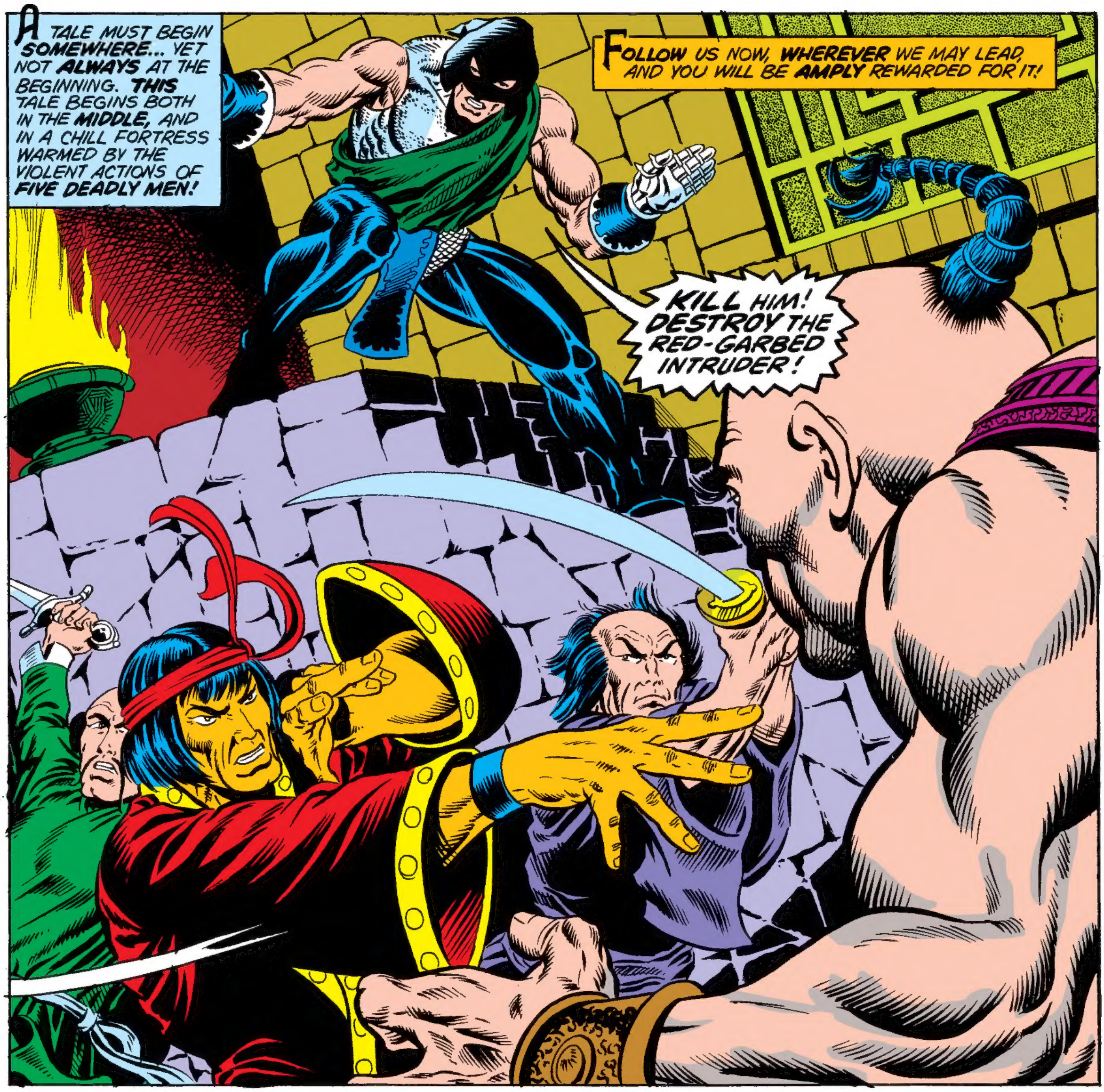
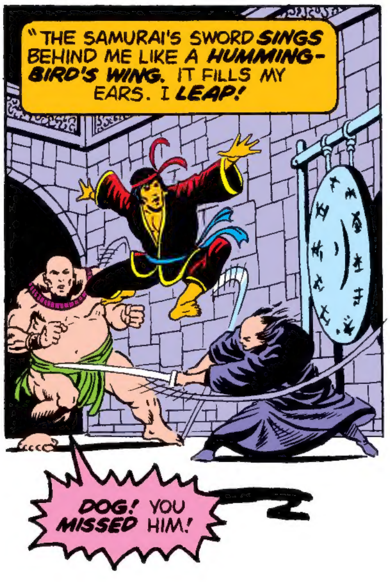
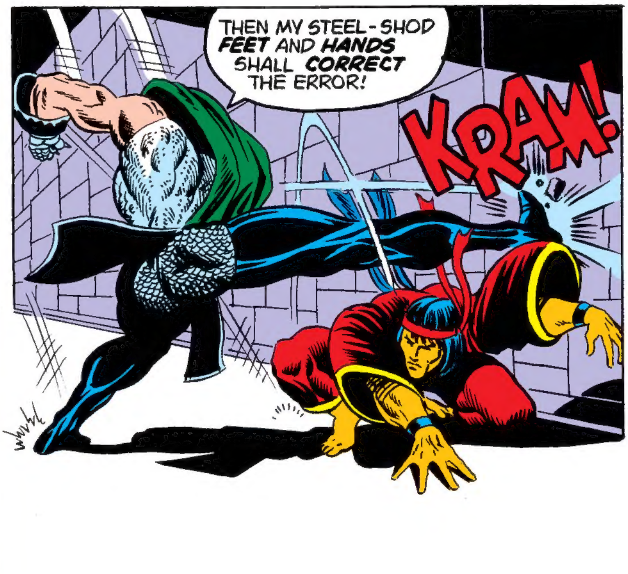
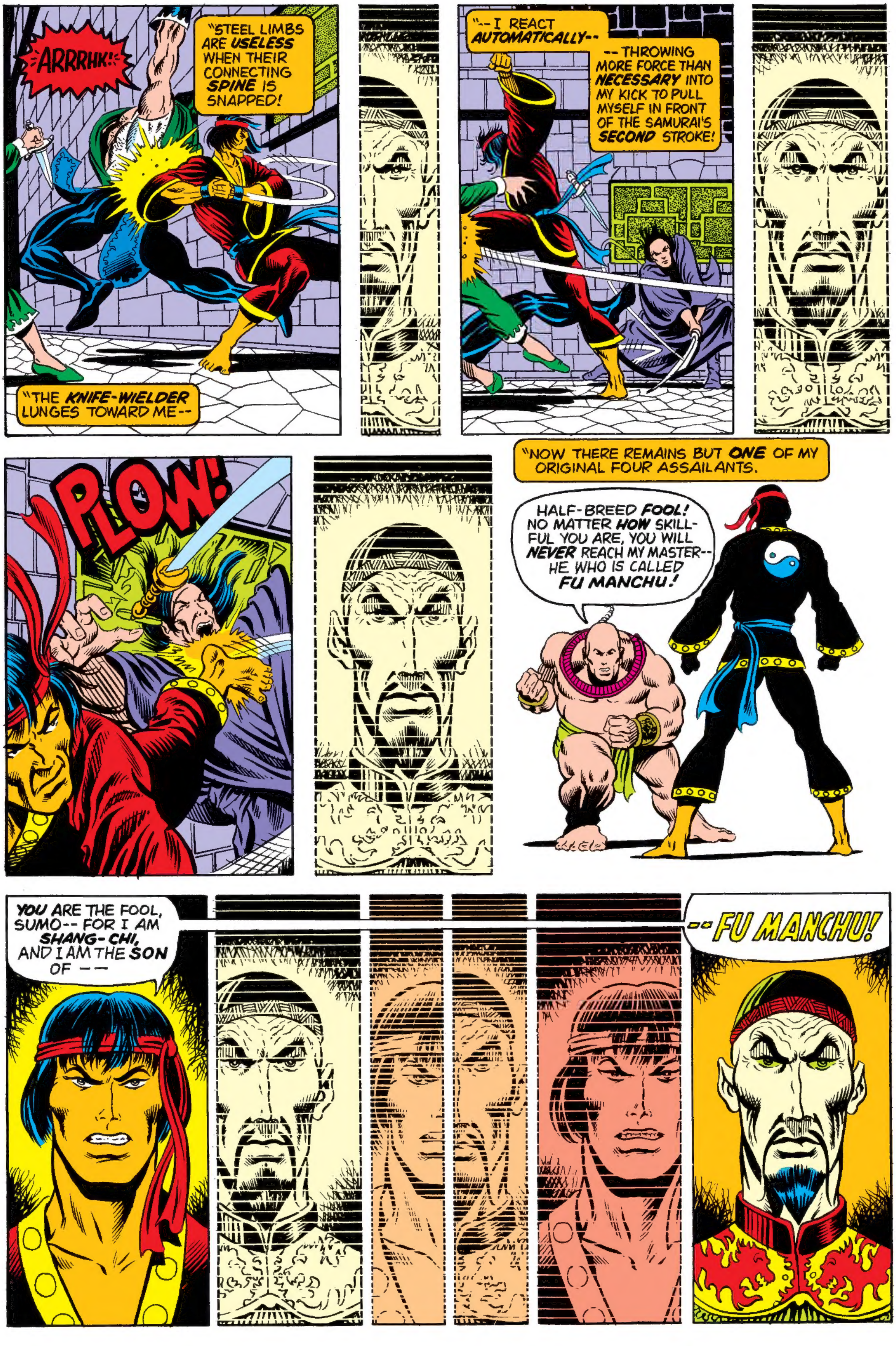
SPECIAL MARVEL EDITION™ FEATURING
THE HANDS OF SHANG-CHI,
MASTER OF KUNG FU™
IRON-FISTED FIRST ISSUE!
MARTIAL-ARTS ACTION --AS YOU'VE NEVER SEEN IT BEFORE!!
GEMINI

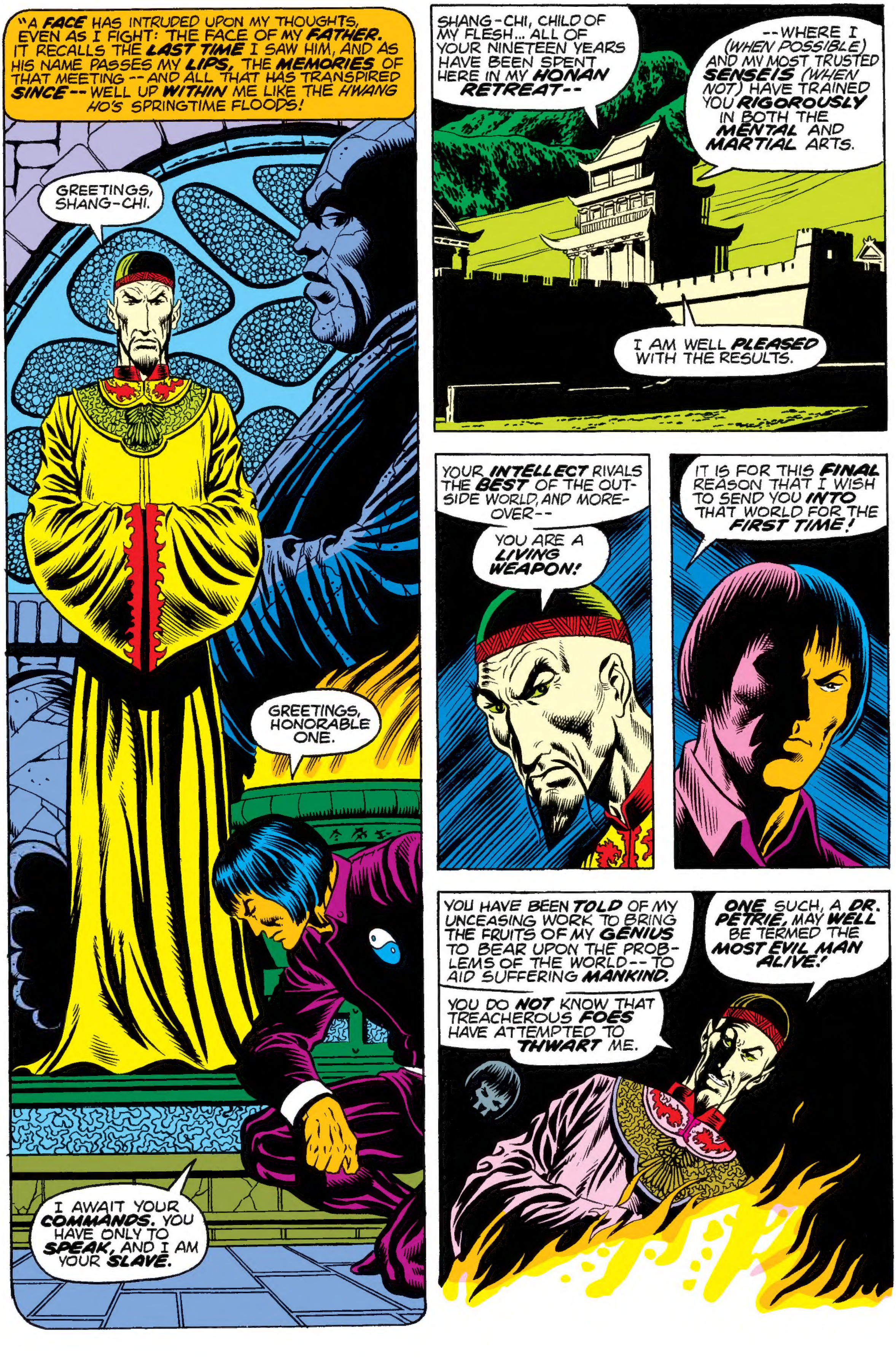

STAN LEE PRESENTS: THE POWER-PACKED PREMIERE APPEARANCE OF THE MOST FANTASTIC, MOST FASCINATING NEW HERO OF THIS OR ANY OTHER YEAR--
SHANG-CHI, MASTER OF KUNG FU!
SHANG-CHI: BORN TO BE THE WORLD'S MOST FEARSOME FIGHTER, YET ALSO BORN TO CARRY THE CRUELLEST CURSE IN MANKIND'S MEMORY--
--BECAUSE HIS FATHER IS THE MOST INFAMOUS VILLAIN OF ALL TIME--
FU MANCHU
YOU'VE NEVER SEEN ANYTHING LIKE THIS BEFORE! WE ABSOLUTELY GUARANTEE IT!
STEVE ENGLEHART / JIM STARLIN
AUTHOR ARTIST
AL MILGROM INKER
TOM ORZECHOWSKI LETTERER
ENGLEHART COLORIST
ROY THOMAS EDITOR
FEATURING CHARACTERS CREATED by SAX ROHMER

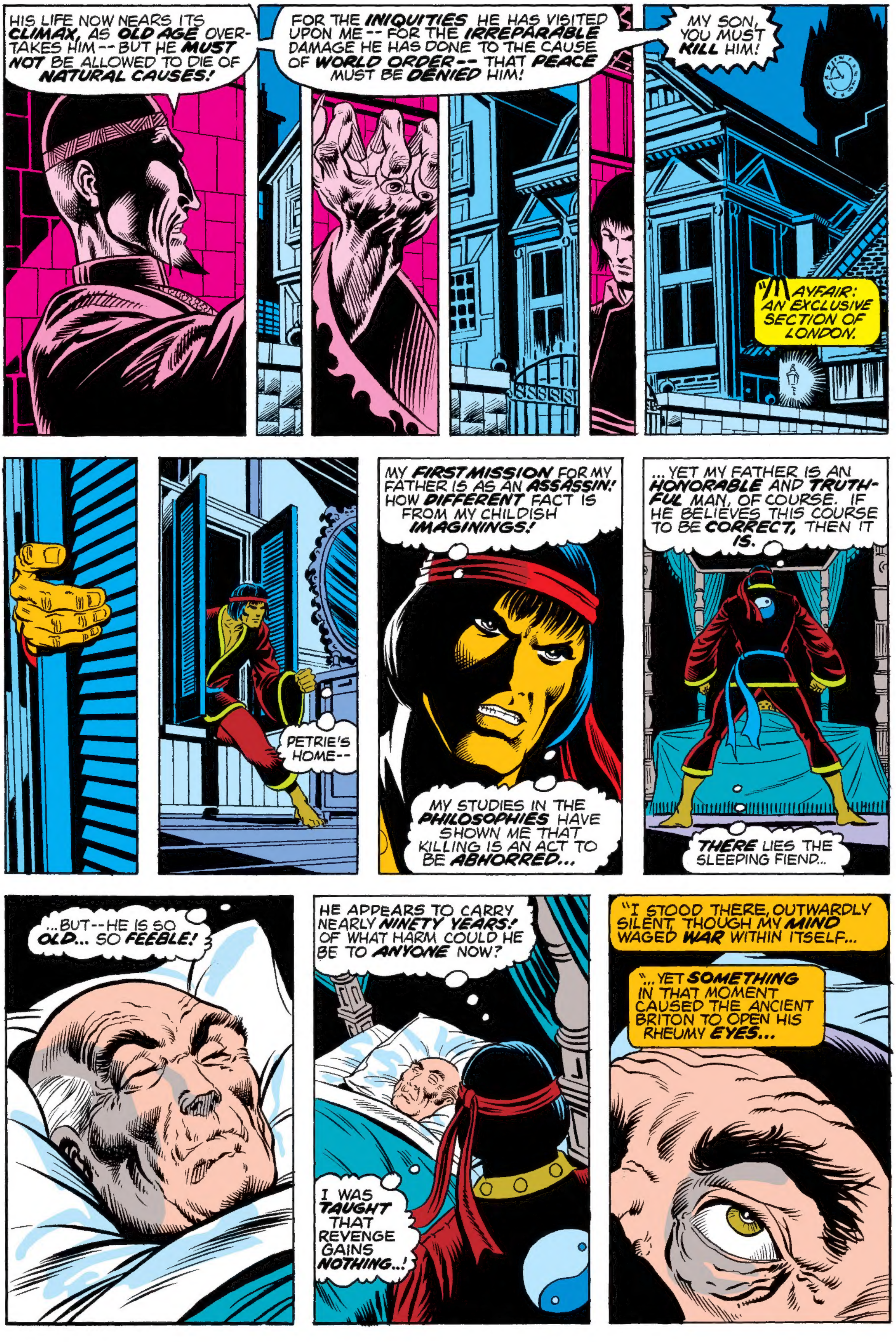

A TALE MUST BEGIN SOMEWHERE... YET NOT ALWAYS AT THE BEGINNING. THIS TALE BEGINS BOTH IN THE MIDDLE, AND IN A CHILL FORTRESS WARMED BY THE VIOLENT ACTIONS OF FIVE DEADLY MEN!
FOLLOW US NOW, WHEREVER WE MAY LEAD, AND YOU WILL BE AMPLY REWARDED FOR IT!
KILL HIM! DESTROY THE RED-GARBED INTRUDER!

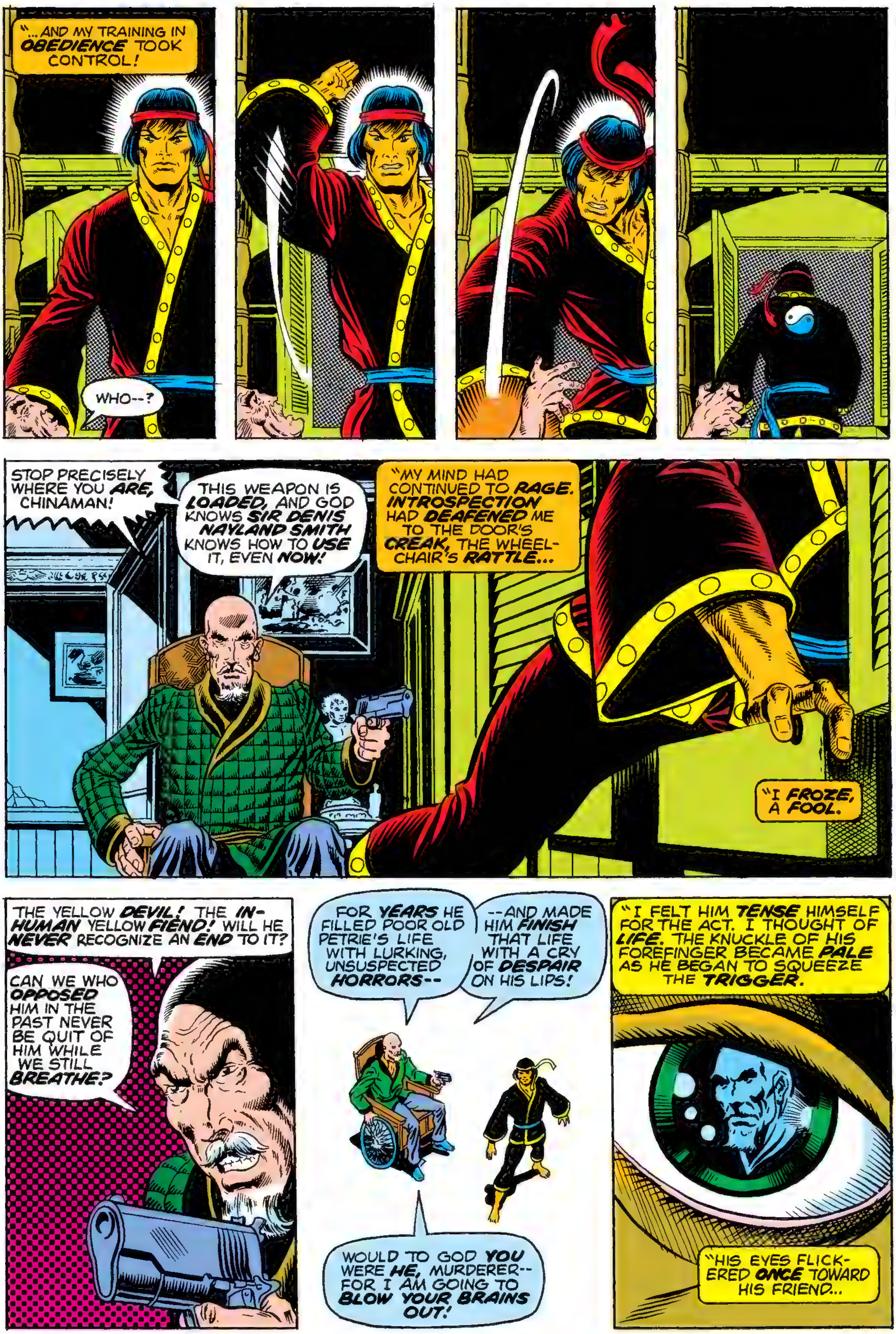

"THE SAMURAI'S SWORD SINGS BEHIND ME LIKE A HUMMING-BIRD'S WING. IT FILLS MY EARS. I LEAP!
DOG! YOU MISSED HIM!

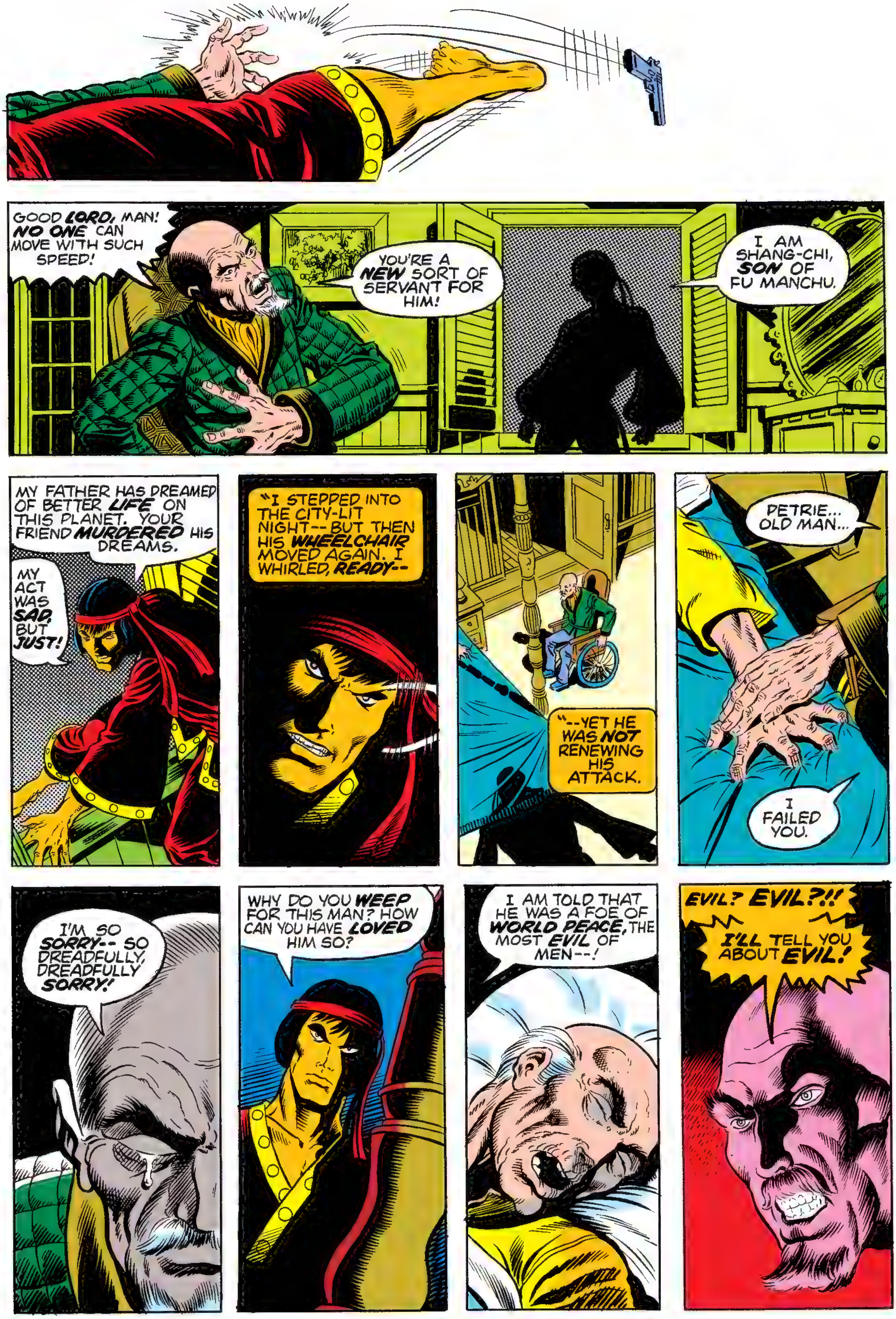

THEN MY STEEL-SHOD FEET AND HANDS SHALL CORRECT THE ERROR!
KRAM!

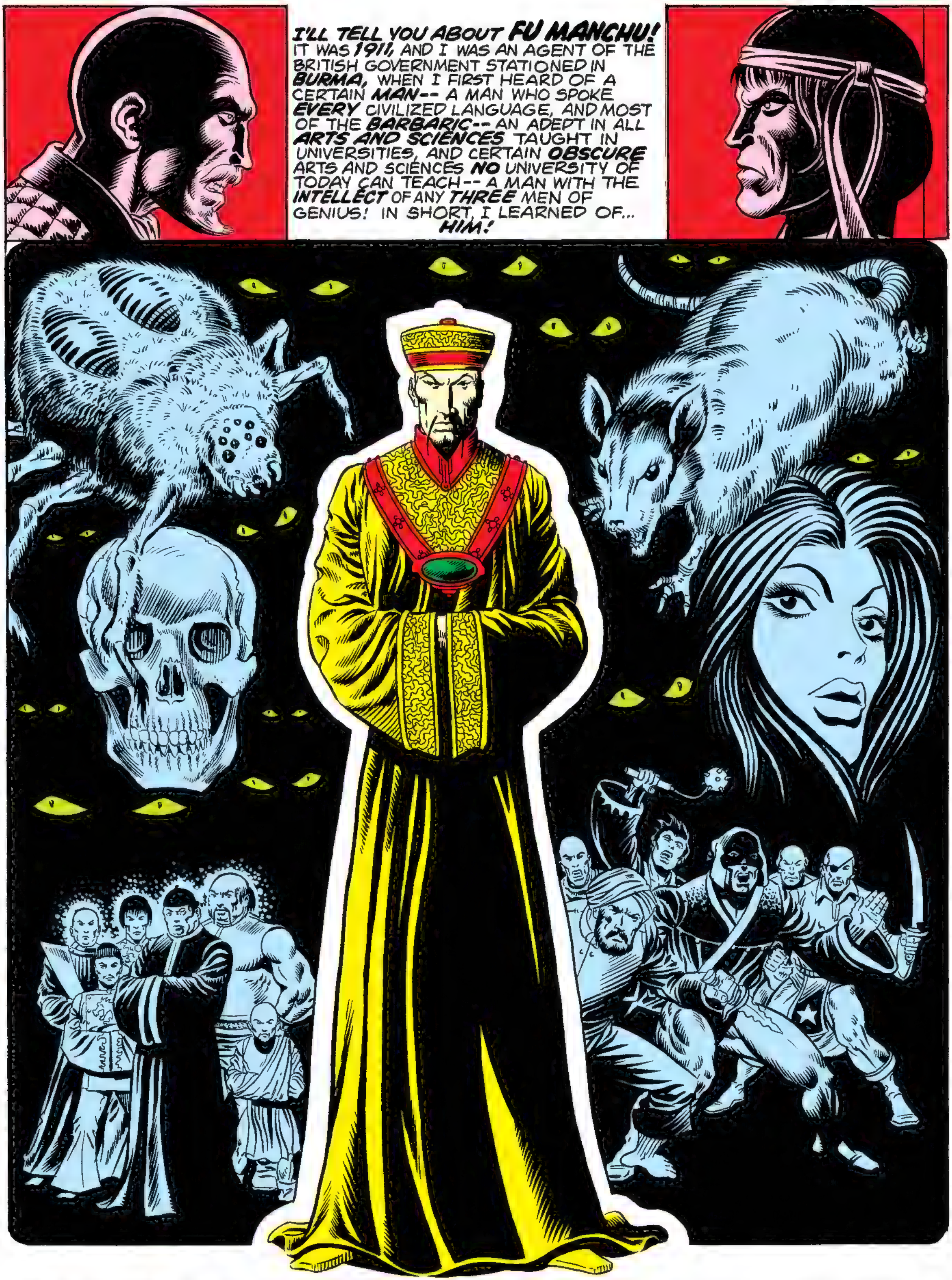

"STEEL LIMBS ARE *USELESS* WHEN THEIR CONNECTING *SPINE* IS SNAPPED!
ARRRHK!
"THE *KNIFE-WIELDER* LUNGES TOWARD ME--
"--I REACT *AUTOMATICALLY*--
--THROWING MORE FORCE THAN *NECESSARY* INTO MY KICK TO PULL MYSELF IN FRONT OF THE SAMURAI'S *SECOND* STROKE!
PLOW!
"NOW THERE REMAINS BUT *ONE* OF MY ORIGINAL FOUR ASSAILANTS.
HALF-BREED *FOOL!* NO MATTER *HOW* SKILLFUL YOU ARE, YOU WILL *NEVER* REACH MY MASTER-- HE WHO IS CALLED *FU MANCHU!*
YOU ARE THE FOOL, SUMO-- FOR I AM *SHANG-CHI,* AND I AM THE *SON* OF --
--*FU MANCHU!*


"A FACE HAS INTRUDED UPON MY THOUGHTS, EVEN AS I FIGHT: THE FACE OF MY FATHER. IT RECALLS THE LAST TIME I SAW HIM, AND AS HIS NAME PASSES MY LIPS, THE MEMORIES OF THAT MEETING -- AND ALL THAT HAS TRANSPIRED SINCE -- WELL UP WITHIN ME LIKE THE HWANG HO'S SPRINGTIME FLOODS!
GREETINGS, SHANG-CHI.
GREETINGS, HONORABLE ONE.
I AWAIT YOUR COMMANDS. YOU HAVE ONLY TO SPEAK, AND I AM YOUR SLAVE.
SHANG-CHI, CHILD OF MY FLESH... ALL OF YOUR NINETEEN YEARS HAVE BEEN SPENT HERE IN MY HONAN RETREAT--
--WHERE I (WHEN POSSIBLE) AND MY MOST TRUSTED SENSEIS (WHEN NOT) HAVE TRAINED YOU RIGOROUSLY IN BOTH THE MENTAL AND MARTIAL ARTS.
I AM WELL PLEASED WITH THE RESULTS.
YOUR INTELLECT RIVALS THE BEST OF THE OUTSIDE WORLD, AND MOREOVER--
YOU ARE A LIVING WEAPON!
IT IS FOR THIS FINAL REASON THAT I WISH TO SEND YOU INTO THAT WORLD FOR THE FIRST TIME!
YOU HAVE BEEN TOLD OF MY UNCEASING WORK TO BRING THE FRUITS OF MY GENIUS TO BEAR UPON THE PROBLEMS OF THE WORLD -- TO AID SUFFERING MANKIND.
YOU DO NOT KNOW THAT TREACHEROUS FOES HAVE ATTEMPTED TO THWART ME.
ONE SUCH, A DR. PETRIE, MAY WELL BE TERMED THE MOST EVIL MAN ALIVE!


HIS LIFE NOW NEARS ITS CLIMAX, AS OLD AGE OVERTAKES HIM -- BUT HE MUST NOT BE ALLOWED TO DIE OF NATURAL CAUSES!
FOR THE INIQUITIES HE HAS VISITED UPON ME -- FOR THE IRREPARABLE DAMAGE HE HAS DONE TO THE CAUSE OF WORLD ORDER -- THAT PEACE MUST BE DENIED HIM!
MY SON, YOU MUST KILL HIM!
"MAYFAIR: AN EXCLUSIVE SECTION OF LONDON.
PETRIE'S HOME--
MY FIRST MISSION FOR MY FATHER IS AS AN ASSASSIN! HOW DIFFERENT FACT IS FROM MY CHILDISH IMAGININGS!
MY STUDIES IN THE PHILOSOPHIES HAVE SHOWN ME THAT KILLING IS AN ACT TO BE ABHORRED...
...YET MY FATHER IS AN HONORABLE AND TRUTHFUL MAN, OF COURSE. IF HE BELIEVES THIS COURSE TO BE CORRECT, THEN IT IS.
THERE LIES THE SLEEPING FIEND...
...BUT--HE IS SO OLD... SO FEEBLE!
HE APPEARS TO CARRY NEARLY NINETY YEARS! OF WHAT HARM COULD HE BE TO ANYONE NOW?
I WAS TAUGHT THAT REVENGE GAINS NOTHING...!
"I STOOD THERE, OUTWARDLY SILENT, THOUGH MY MIND WAGED WAR WITHIN ITSELF...
"...YET SOMETHING IN THAT MOMENT CAUSED THE ANCIENT BRITON TO OPEN HIS RHEUMY EYES...

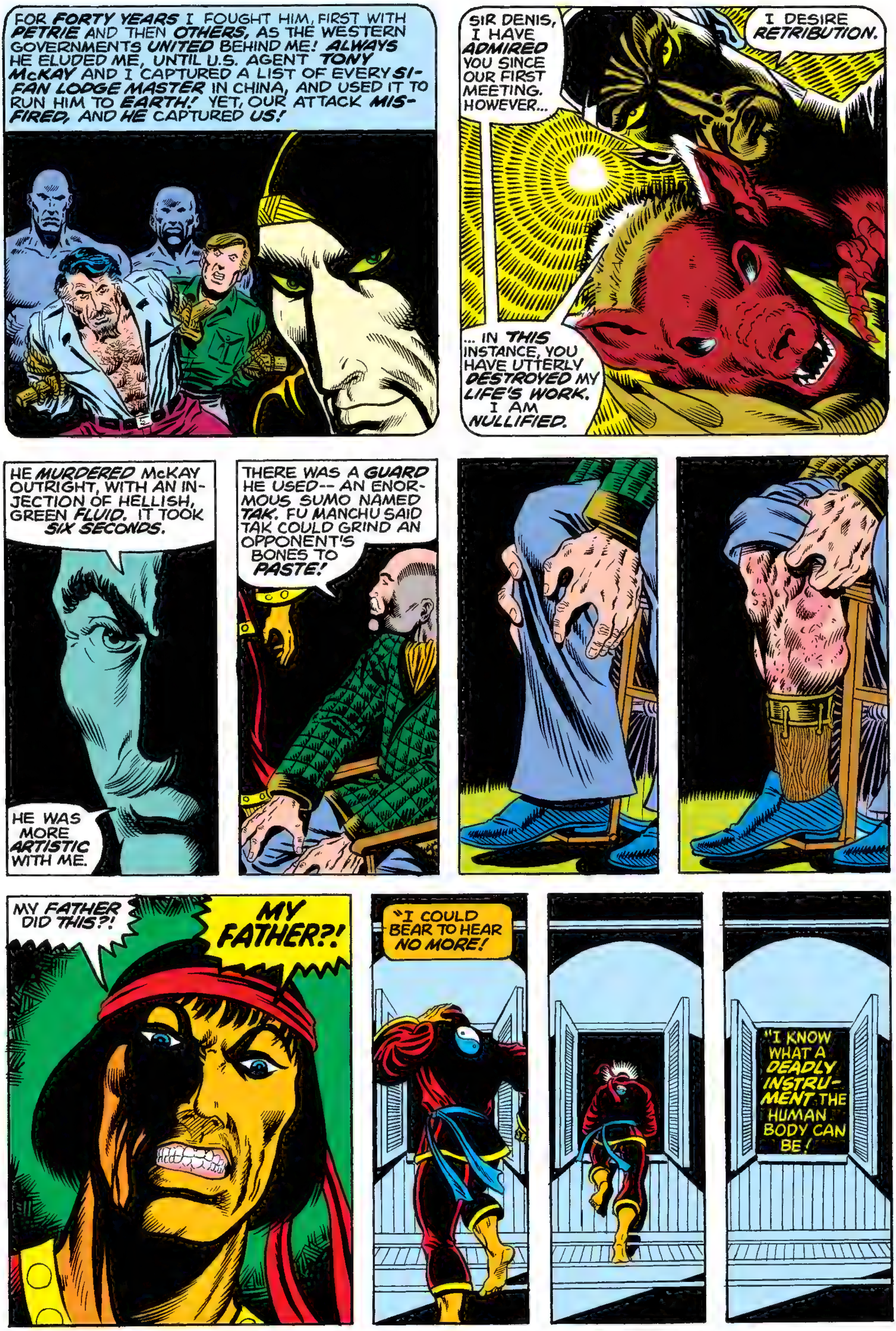

"...AND MY TRAINING IN OBEDIENCE TOOK CONTROL!
WHO--?
STOP PRECISELY WHERE YOU ARE, CHINAMAN!
THIS WEAPON IS LOADED, AND GOD KNOWS SIR DENIS NAYLAND SMITH KNOWS HOW TO USE IT, EVEN NOW!
"MY MIND HAD CONTINUED TO RAGE. INTROSPECTION HAD DEAFENED ME TO THE DOOR'S CREAK, THE WHEEL-CHAIR'S RATTLE...
"I FROZE, A FOOL.
THE YELLOW DEVIL! THE INHUMAN YELLOW FIEND! WILL HE NEVER RECOGNIZE AN END TO IT?
CAN WE WHO OPPOSED HIM IN THE PAST NEVER BE QUIT OF HIM WHILE WE STILL BREATHE?
FOR YEARS HE FILLED POOR OLD PETRIE'S LIFE WITH LURKING, UNSUSPECTED HORRORS--
--AND MADE HIM FINISH THAT LIFE WITH A CRY OF DESPAIR ON HIS LIPS!
WOULD TO GOD YOU WERE HE, MURDERER-- FOR I AM GOING TO BLOW YOUR BRAINS OUT!
"I FELT HIM TENSE HIMSELF FOR THE ACT. I THOUGHT OF LIFE. THE KNUCKLE OF HIS FOREFINGER BECAME PALE AS HE BEGAN TO SQUEEZE THE TRIGGER.
"HIS EYES FLICKERED ONCE TOWARD HIS FRIEND...

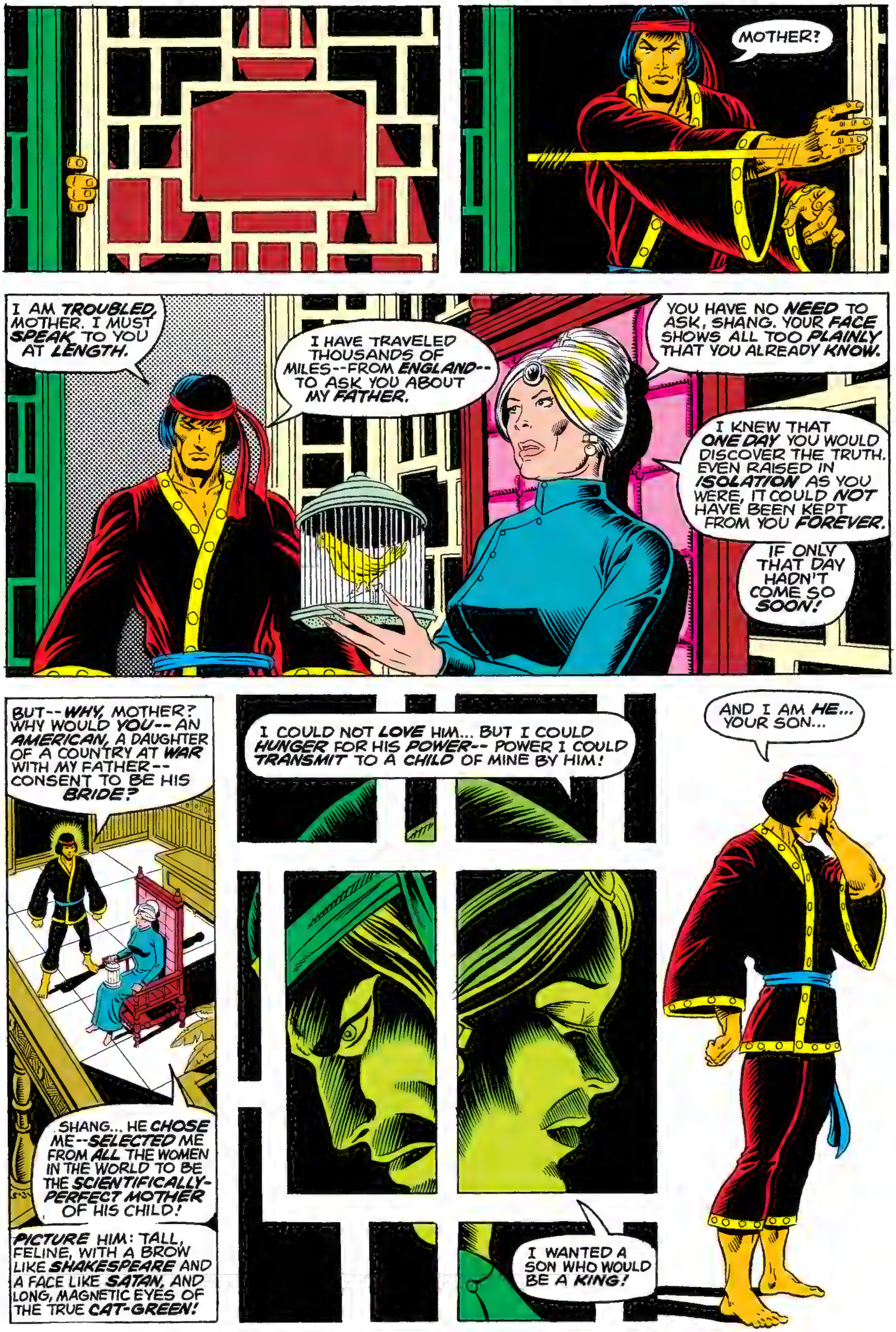

GOOD LORD, MAN! NO ONE CAN MOVE WITH SUCH SPEED!
YOU'RE A NEW SORT OF SERVANT FOR HIM!
I AM SHANG-CHI, SON OF FU MANCHU.
MY FATHER HAS DREAMED OF BETTER LIFE ON THIS PLANET. YOUR FRIEND MURDERED HIS DREAMS.
MY ACT WAS SAD, BUT JUST!
"I STEPPED INTO THE CITY-LIT NIGHT--BUT THEN HIS WHEELCHAIR MOVED AGAIN. I WHIRLED, READY--
"--YET HE WAS NOT RENEWING HIS ATTACK.
PETRIE... OLD MAN...
I FAILED YOU.
I'M SO SORRY-- SO DREADFULLY, DREADFULLY SORRY!
WHY DO YOU WEEP FOR THIS MAN? HOW CAN YOU HAVE LOVED HIM SO?
I AM TOLD THAT HE WAS A FOE OF WORLD PEACE, THE MOST EVIL OF MEN--!
EVIL? EVIL?!!
I'LL TELL YOU ABOUT EVIL!

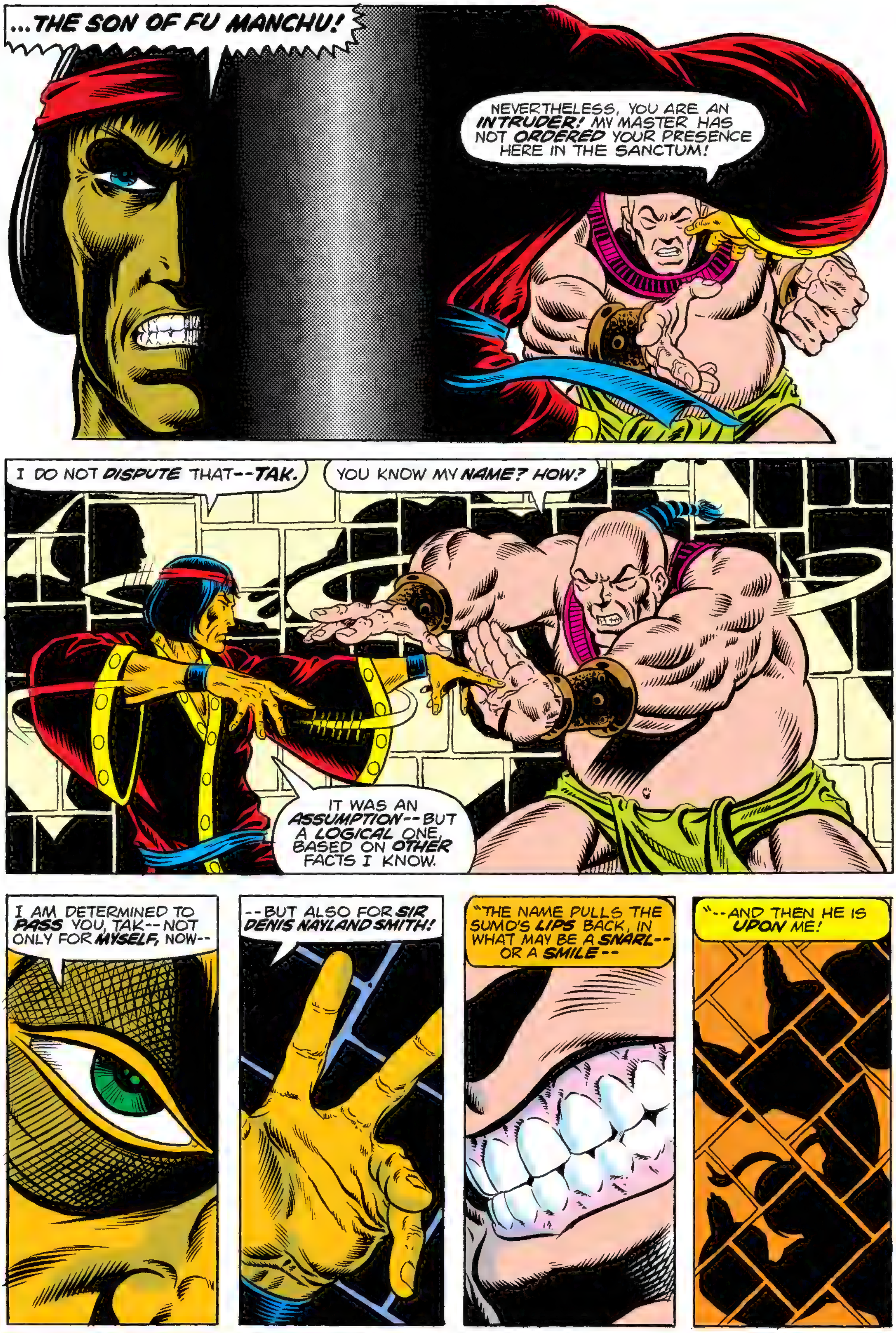


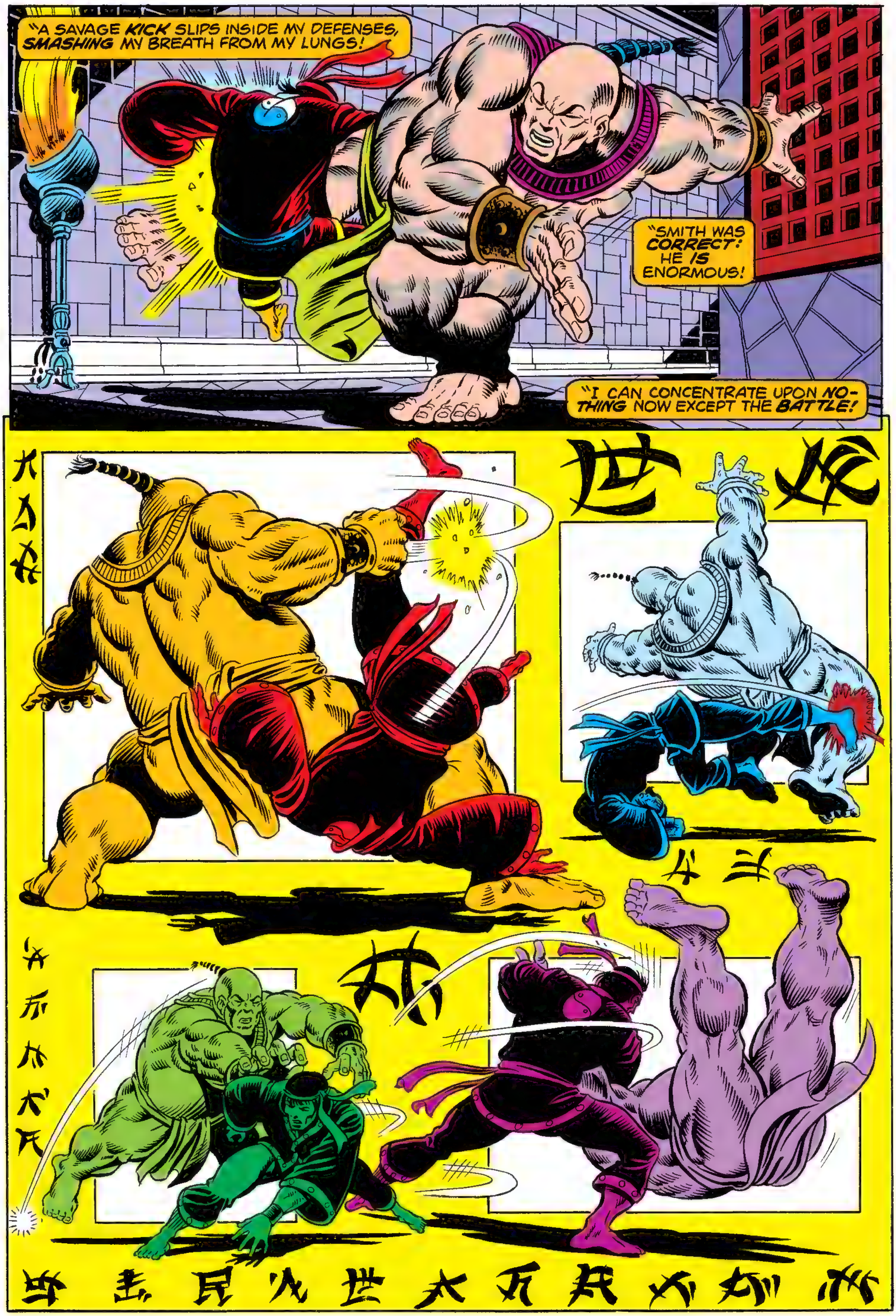
I'LL TELL YOU ABOUT **FU MANCHU!** IT WAS **1911,** AND I WAS AN AGENT OF THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT STATIONED IN **BURMA,** WHEN I FIRST HEARD OF A CERTAIN **MAN**-- A MAN WHO SPOKE **EVERY** CIVILIZED LANGUAGE, AND MOST OF THE **BARBARIC**-- AN ADEPT IN ALL **ARTS AND SCIENCES** TAUGHT IN UNIVERSITIES, AND CERTAIN **OBSCURE** ARTS AND SCIENCES **NO** UNIVERSITY OF TODAY CAN TEACH-- A MAN WITH THE **INTELLECT** OF ANY **THREE** MEN OF GENIUS! IN SHORT, I LEARNED OF... **HIM!**

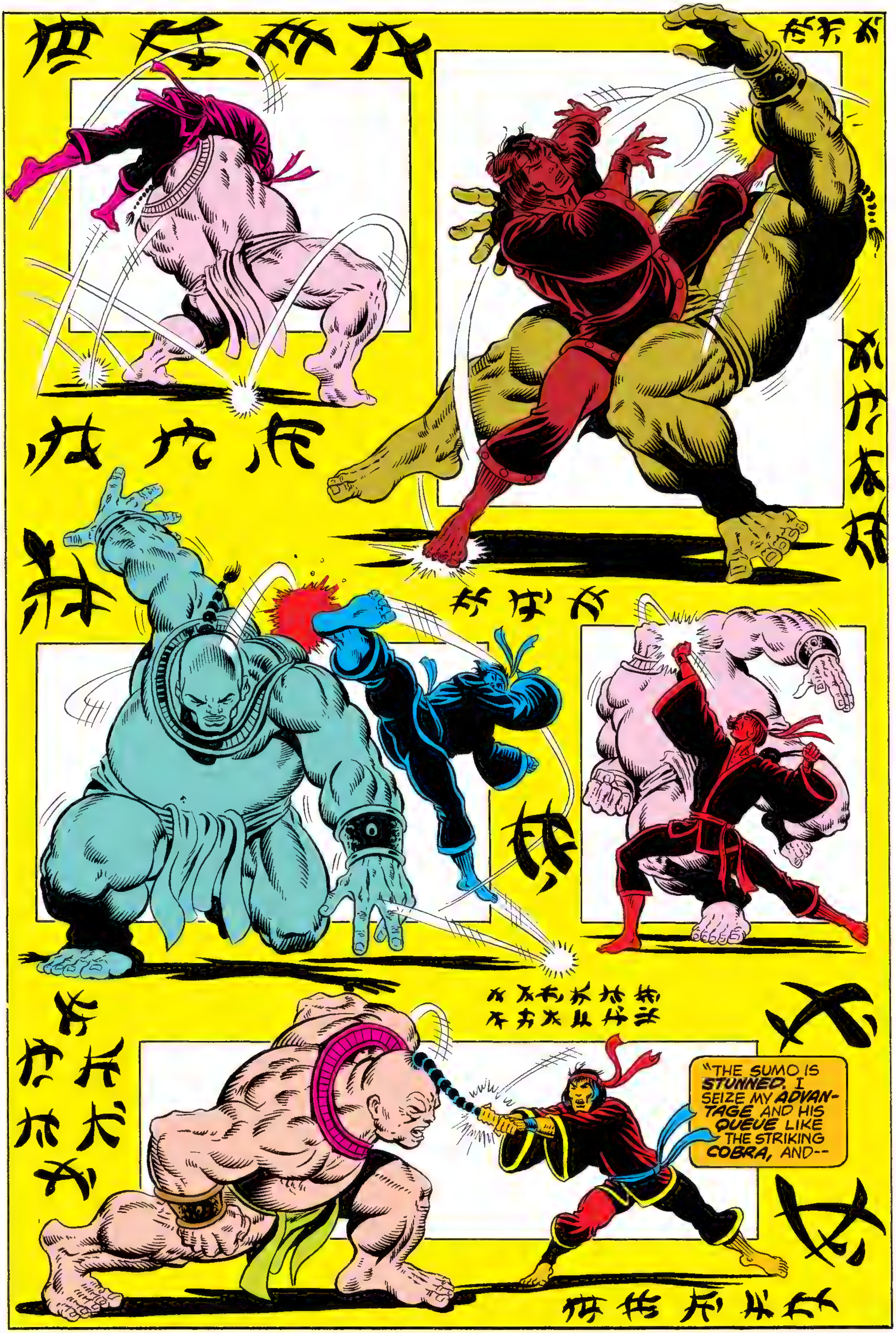
HE WAS **ANCIENT** THEN--OLDER THAN **I** AM NOW! BUT BY 1932, HE HAD DEVELOPED THE **ELIXER VITAE**-- THE **OIL OF LIFE**-- TO PRESERVE AND **PROLONG** HIS VITALITY. IF **ANYTHING,** HE HAS GROWN **YOUNGER** SINCE THEN. **AGELESSNESS** HAS FREED HIM TO WORK SINGLE-MINDEDLY TOWARD HIS SINGLE **GOAL:** DOMINATION OF THE WORLD BY THE **SI-FAN,** THE MOST **SINISTER** SECRET SOCIETY EXTANT! ITS ADHERANTS-- **ALL** AT HIS COMMAND-- INCLUDE **DACOITS, PHANSIGARS, THUGS, HASHISHIN,** AND OTHER, EVEN **MORE** TERRIBLE CULTS! YET HIS **OTHER** WEAPONS ARE **WORSE,** FOR HE EMPLOYS **SPIDERS, RATS, REPTILES,** AND OTHER LOATHSOME VERMIN-- AS WELL AS THE WORLD'S MOST BEAUTIFUL **WOMEN**-- AS HIS PAWNS!

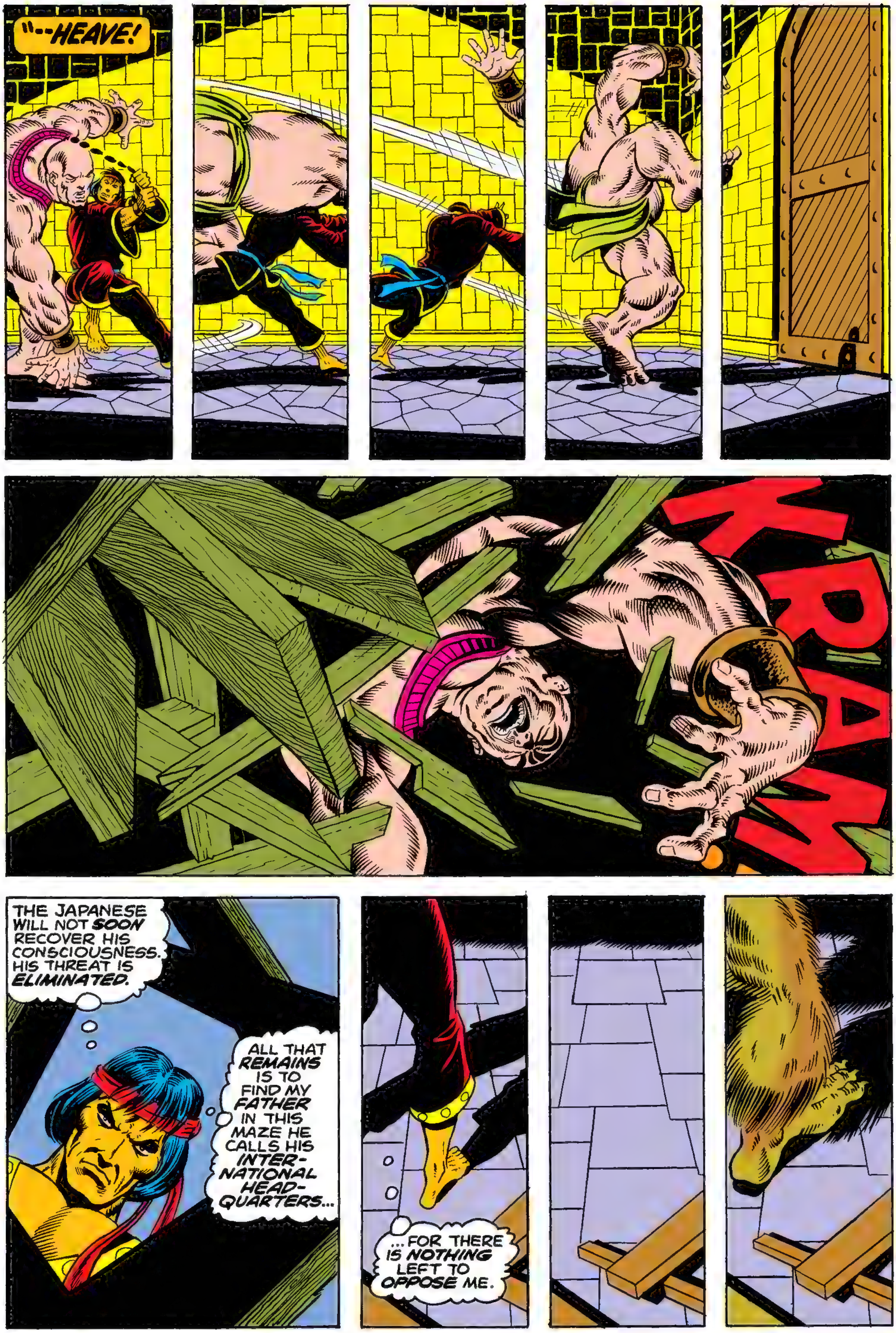

FOR FORTY YEARS I FOUGHT HIM, FIRST WITH PETRIE AND THEN OTHERS, AS THE WESTERN GOVERNMENTS UNITED BEHIND ME! ALWAYS HE ELUDED ME, UNTIL U.S. AGENT TONY McKAY AND I CAPTURED A LIST OF EVERY SI-FAN LODGE MASTER IN CHINA, AND USED IT TO RUN HIM TO EARTH! YET, OUR ATTACK MISFIRED, AND HE CAPTURED US!
SIR DENIS, I HAVE ADMIRED YOU SINCE OUR FIRST MEETING. HOWEVER...
I DESIRE RETRIBUTION.
... IN THIS INSTANCE, YOU HAVE UTTERLY DESTROYED MY LIFE'S WORK. I AM NULLIFIED.
HE MURDERED McKAY OUTRIGHT, WITH AN INJECTION OF HELLISH, GREEN FLUID. IT TOOK SIX SECONDS.
HE WAS MORE ARTISTIC WITH ME.
THERE WAS A GUARD HE USED-- AN ENORMOUS SUMO NAMED TAK. FU MANCHU SAID TAK COULD GRIND AN OPPONENT'S BONES TO PASTE!
MY FATHER DID THIS?!
MY FATHER?!
"I COULD BEAR TO HEAR NO MORE!
"I KNOW WHAT A DEADLY INSTRUMENT THE HUMAN BODY CAN BE!

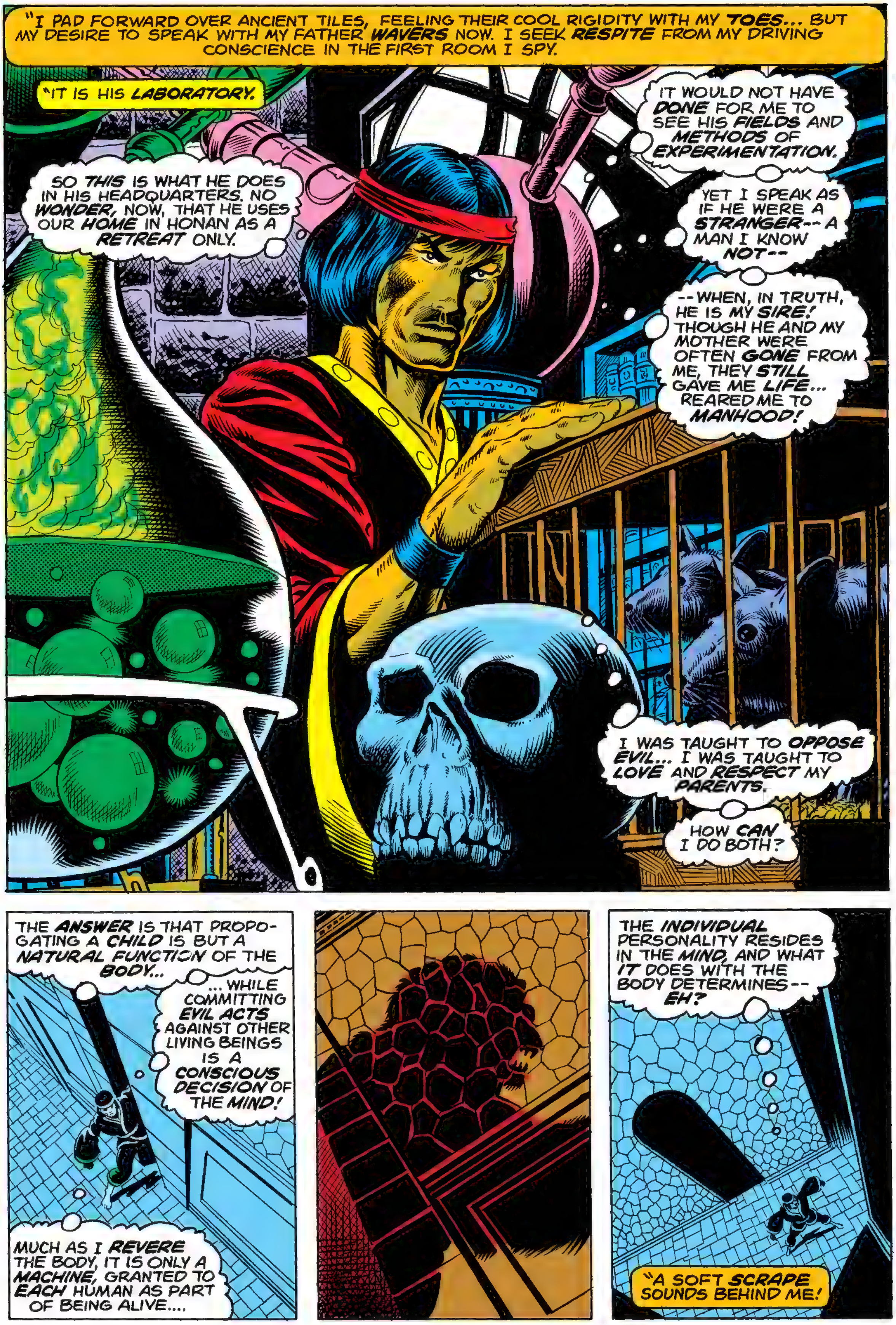

MOTHER?
I AM TROUBLED, MOTHER. I MUST SPEAK TO YOU AT LENGTH.
I HAVE TRAVELED THOUSANDS OF MILES--FROM ENGLAND--TO ASK YOU ABOUT MY FATHER.
YOU HAVE NO NEED TO ASK, SHANG. YOUR FACE SHOWS ALL TOO PLAINLY THAT YOU ALREADY KNOW.
I KNEW THAT ONE DAY YOU WOULD DISCOVER THE TRUTH. EVEN RAISED IN ISOLATION AS YOU WERE, IT COULD NOT HAVE BEEN KEPT FROM YOU FOREVER.
IF ONLY THAT DAY HADN'T COME SO SOON!
BUT--WHY, MOTHER? WHY WOULD YOU--AN AMERICAN, A DAUGHTER OF A COUNTRY AT WAR WITH MY FATHER--CONSENT TO BE HIS BRIDE?
SHANG... HE CHOSE ME--SELECTED ME FROM ALL THE WOMEN IN THE WORLD TO BE THE SCIENTIFICALLY-PERFECT MOTHER OF HIS CHILD!
PICTURE HIM: TALL, FELINE, WITH A BROW LIKE SHAKESPEARE AND A FACE LIKE SATAN, AND LONG, MAGNETIC EYES OF THE TRUE CAT-GREEN!
I COULD NOT LOVE HIM... BUT I COULD HUNGER FOR HIS POWER--POWER I COULD TRANSMIT TO A CHILD OF MINE BY HIM!
I WANTED A SON WHO WOULD BE A KING!
AND I AM HE... YOUR SON...

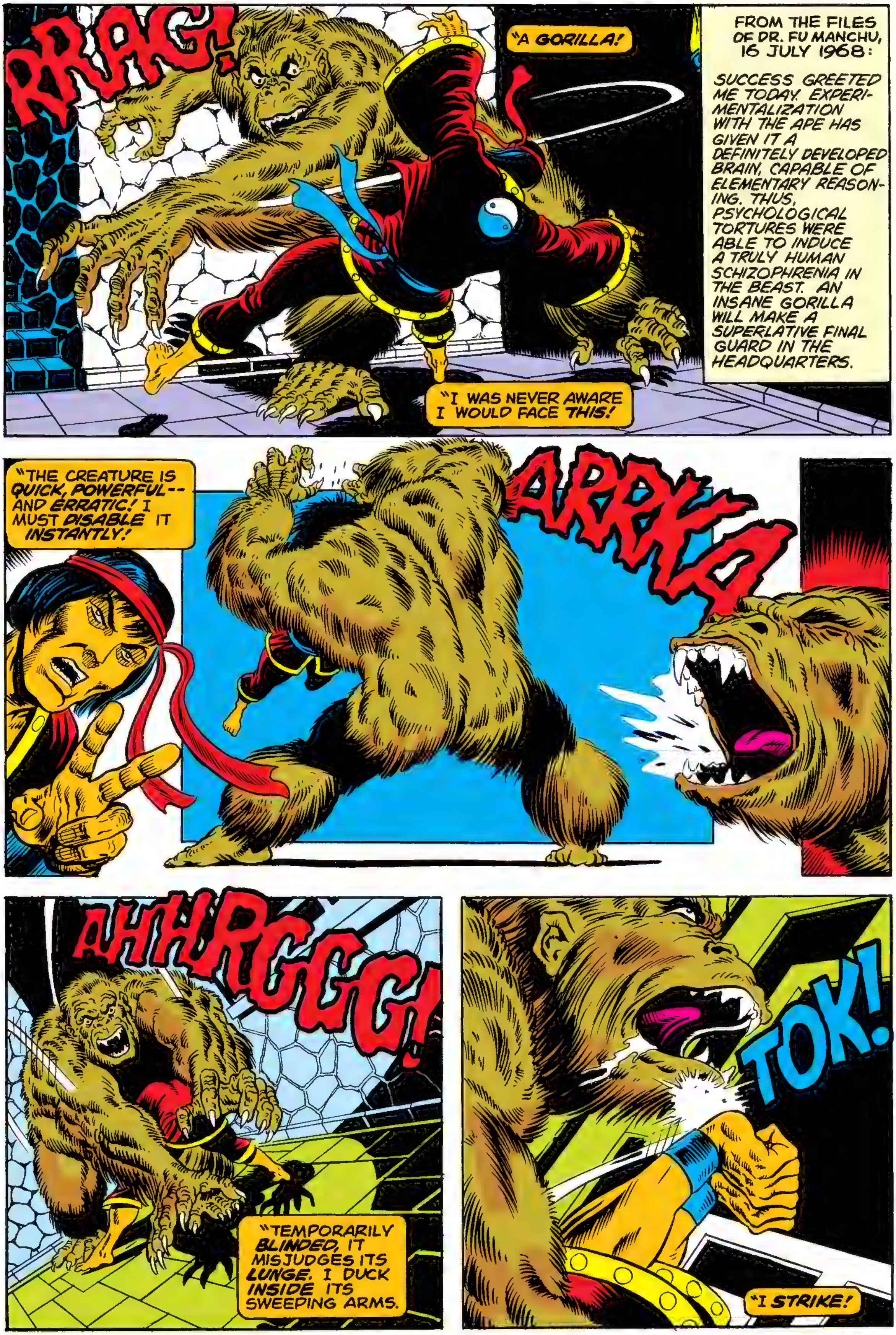

...THE SON OF FU MANCHU!
NEVERTHELESS, YOU ARE AN INTRUDER! MY MASTER HAS NOT ORDERED YOUR PRESENCE HERE IN THE SANCTUM!
I DO NOT DISPUTE THAT--TAK.
YOU KNOW MY NAME? HOW?
IT WAS AN ASSUMPTION--BUT A LOGICAL ONE, BASED ON OTHER FACTS I KNOW.
I AM DETERMINED TO PASS YOU, TAK--NOT ONLY FOR MYSELF, NOW--
--BUT ALSO FOR SIR DENIS NAYLAND SMITH!
"THE NAME PULLS THE SUMO'S LIPS BACK, IN WHAT MAY BE A SNARL--OR A SMILE--
"--AND THEN HE IS UPON ME!

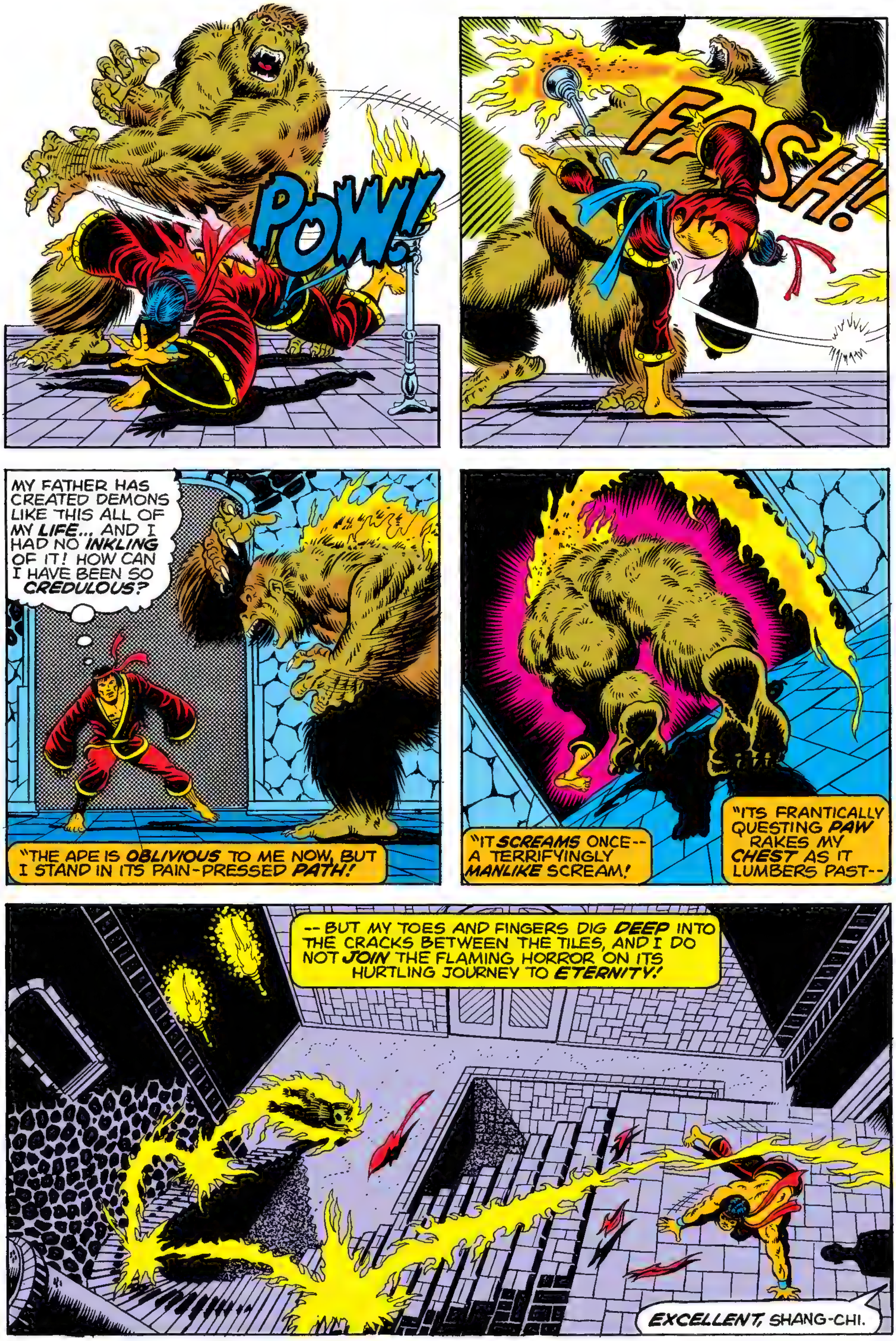

"A SAVAGE KICK SLIPS INSIDE MY DEFENSES, SMASHING MY BREATH FROM MY LUNGS!
"SMITH WAS CORRECT: HE IS ENORMOUS!
"I CAN CONCENTRATE UPON NOTHING NOW EXCEPT THE BATTLE!

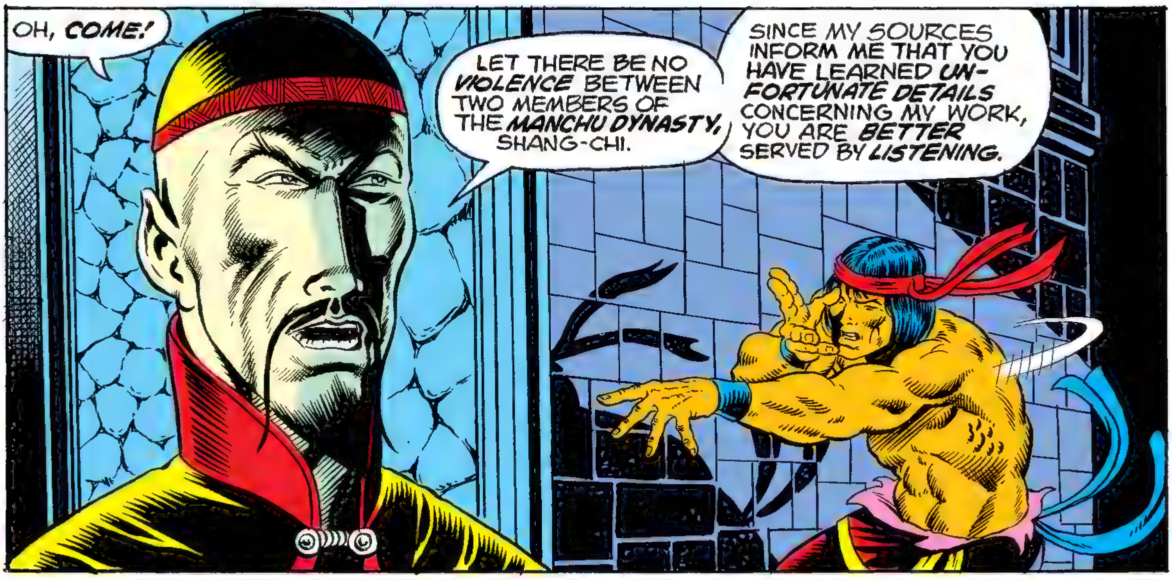

"THE SUMO IS STUNNED. I SEIZE MY ADVANTAGE AND HIS QUEUE LIKE THE STRIKING COBRA, AND--

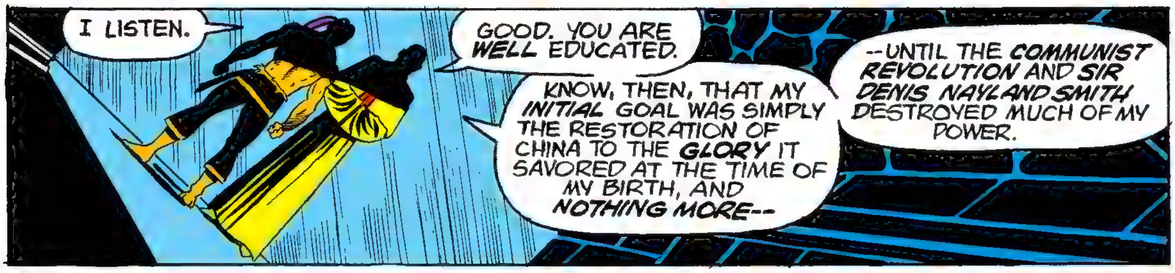

"--HEAVE!
KRA
THE JAPANESE WILL NOT SOON RECOVER HIS CONSCIOUSNESS. HIS THREAT IS ELIMINATED.
ALL THAT REMAINS IS TO FIND MY FATHER IN THIS MAZE HE CALLS HIS INTERNATIONAL HEADQUARTERS...
...FOR THERE IS NOTHING LEFT TO OPPOSE ME.

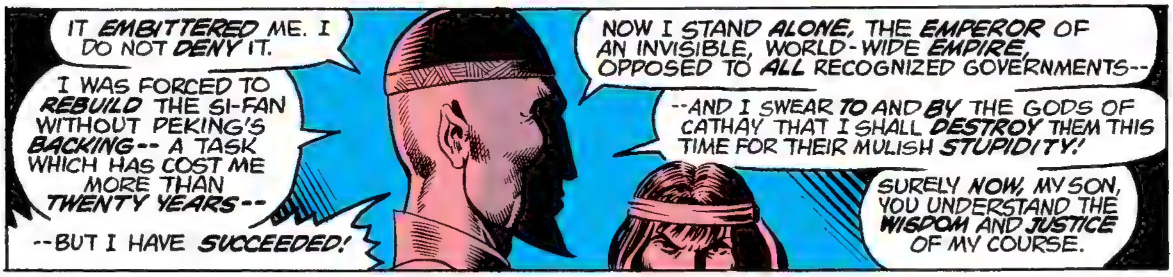

"I PAD FORWARD OVER ANCIENT TILES, FEELING THEIR COOL RIGIDITY WITH MY TOES... BUT MY DESIRE TO SPEAK WITH MY FATHER WAVERS NOW. I SEEK RESPITE FROM MY DRIVING CONSCIENCE IN THE FIRST ROOM I SPY.
"IT IS HIS LABORATORY.
SO THIS IS WHAT HE DOES IN HIS HEADQUARTERS. NO WONDER, NOW, THAT HE USES OUR HOME IN HONAN AS A RETREAT ONLY.
IT WOULD NOT HAVE DONE FOR ME TO SEE HIS FIELDS AND METHODS OF EXPERIMENTATION.
YET I SPEAK AS IF HE WERE A STRANGER-- A MAN I KNOW NOT--
--WHEN, IN TRUTH, HE IS MY SIRE! THOUGH HE AND MY MOTHER WERE OFTEN GONE FROM ME, THEY STILL GAVE ME LIFE... REARED ME TO MANHOOD!
I WAS TAUGHT TO OPPOSE EVIL... I WAS TAUGHT TO LOVE AND RESPECT MY PARENTS.
HOW CAN I DO BOTH?
THE ANSWER IS THAT PROPOGATING A CHILD IS BUT A NATURAL FUNCTION OF THE BODY...
...WHILE COMMITTING EVIL ACTS AGAINST OTHER LIVING BEINGS IS A CONSCIOUS DECISION OF THE MIND!
MUCH AS I REVERE THE BODY, IT IS ONLY A MACHINE, GRANTED TO EACH HUMAN AS PART OF BEING ALIVE....
THE INDIVIDUAL PERSONALITY RESIDES IN THE MIND, AND WHAT IT DOES WITH THE BODY DETERMINES-- EH?
"A SOFT SCRAPE SOUNDS BEHIND ME!

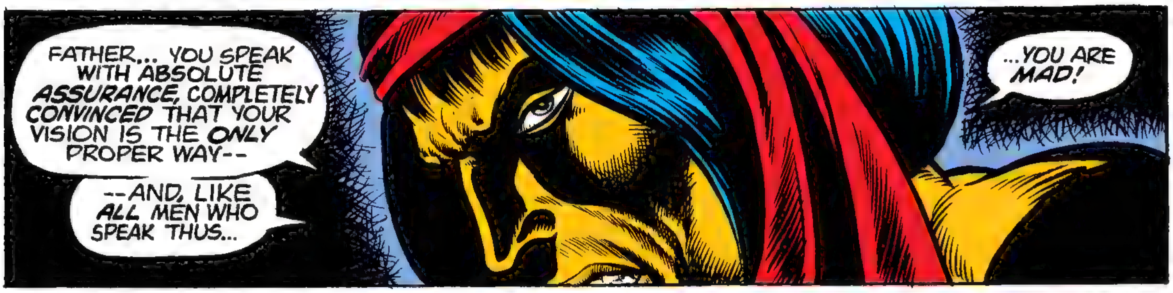

RRRAG!
"A GORILLA!
FROM THE FILES OF DR. FU MANCHU, 16 JULY 1968:
SUCCESS GREETED ME TODAY. EXPERIMENTALIZATION WITH THE APE HAS GIVEN IT A DEFINITELY DEVELOPED BRAIN, CAPABLE OF ELEMENTARY REASONING. THUS, PSYCHOLOGICAL TORTURES WERE ABLE TO INDUCE A TRULY HUMAN SCHIZOPHRENIA IN THE BEAST. AN INSANE GORILLA WILL MAKE A SUPERLATIVE FINAL GUARD IN THE HEADQUARTERS.
"I WAS NEVER AWARE I WOULD FACE THIS!
"THE CREATURE IS QUICK, POWERFUL-- AND ERRATIC! I MUST DISABLE IT INSTANTLY!
ARRKA
AHHRGGG!
"TEMPORARILY BLINDED, IT MISJUDGES ITS LUNGE. I DUCK INSIDE ITS SWEEPING ARMS.
TOK!
"I STRIKE!

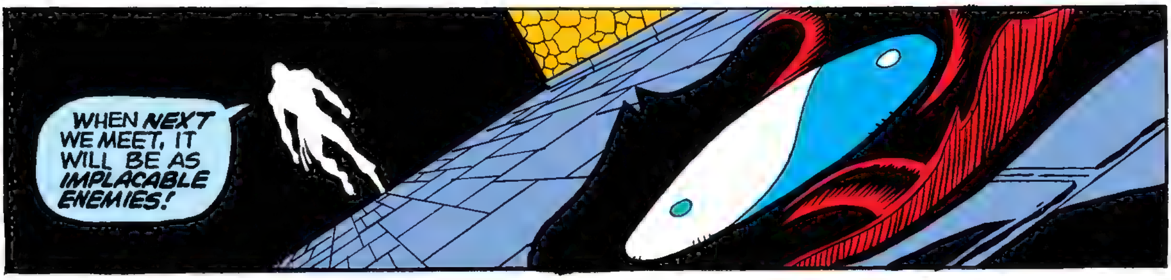

POW!
FASH!
MY FATHER HAS CREATED DEMONS LIKE THIS ALL OF MY LIFE... AND I HAD NO INKLING OF IT! HOW CAN I HAVE BEEN SO CREDULOUS?
"THE APE IS OBLIVIOUS TO ME NOW, BUT I STAND IN ITS PAIN-PRESSED PATH!
"IT SCREAMS ONCE-- A TERRIFYINGLY MANLIKE SCREAM!
"ITS FRANTICALLY QUESTING PAW RAKES MY CHEST AS IT LUMBERS PAST--
--BUT MY TOES AND FINGERS DIG DEEP INTO THE CRACKS BETWEEN THE TILES, AND I DO NOT JOIN THE FLAMING HORROR ON ITS HURTLING JOURNEY TO ETERNITY!
EXCELLENT, SHANG-CHI.

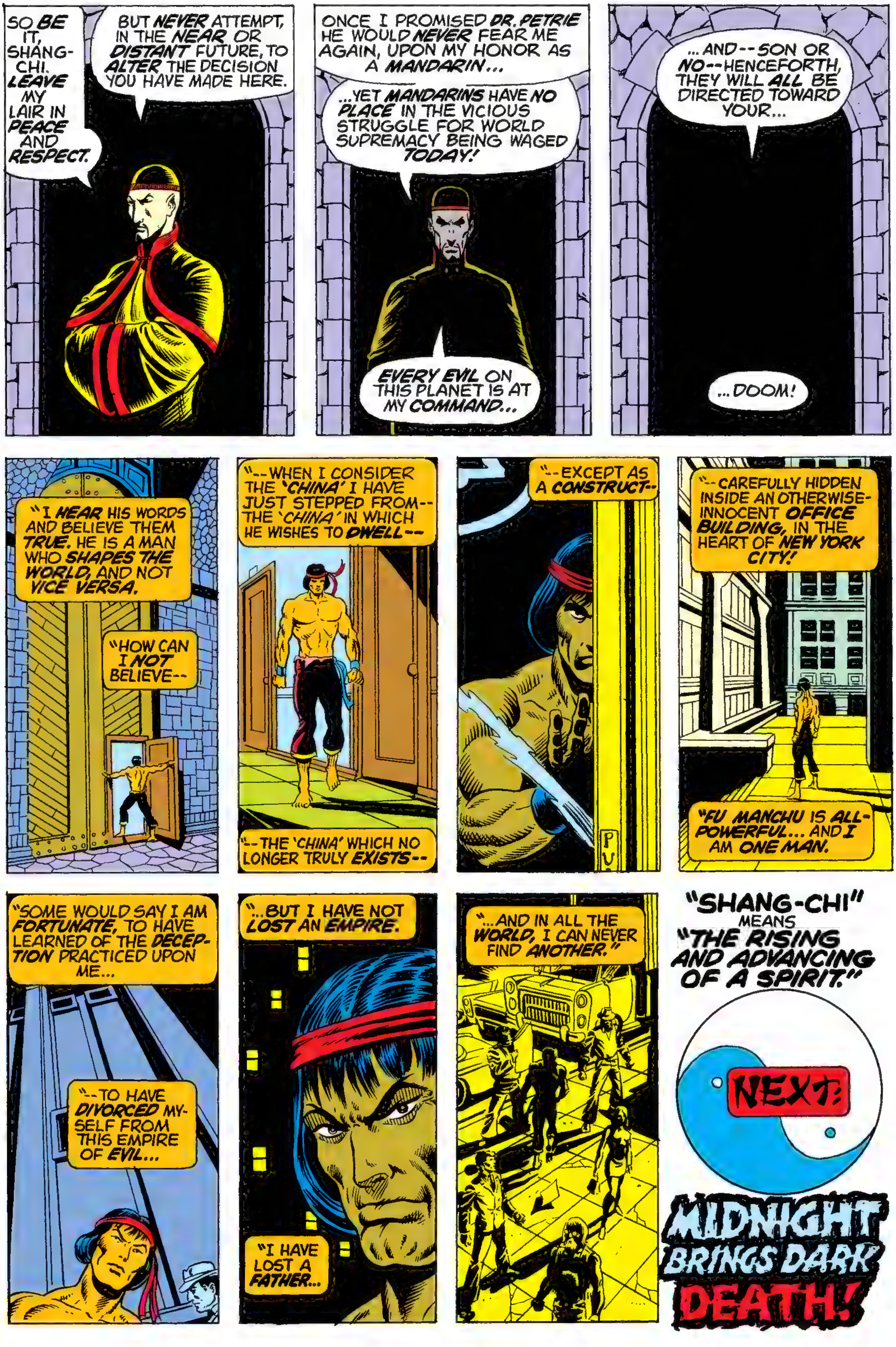

OH, *COME!*
LET THERE BE NO *VIOLENCE* BETWEEN TWO MEMBERS OF THE *MANCHU DYNASTY,* SHANG-CHI.
SINCE MY SOURCES INFORM ME THAT YOU HAVE LEARNED *UNFORTUNATE DETAILS* CONCERNING MY WORK, YOU ARE *BETTER* SERVED BY *LISTENING.*

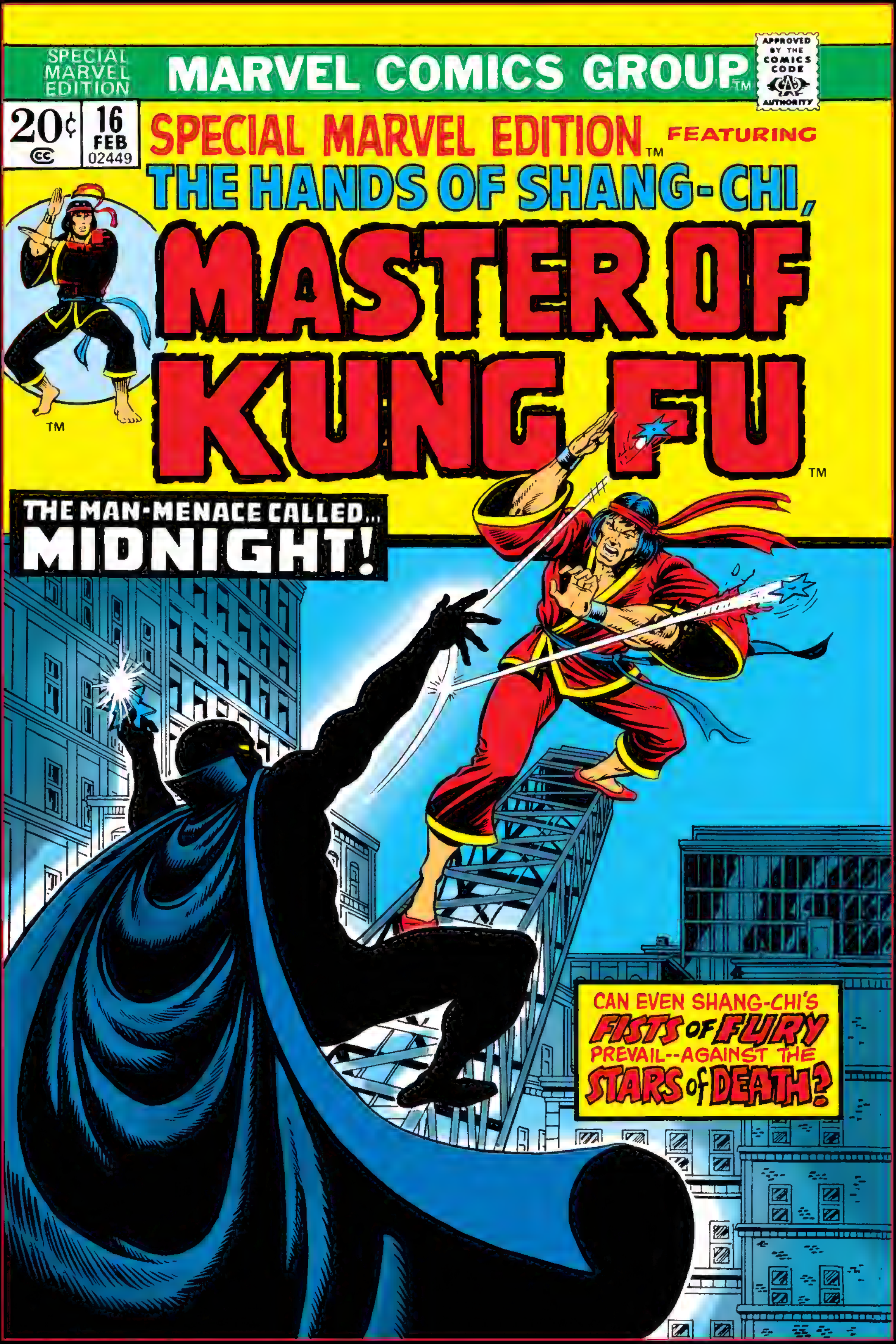

I LISTEN.
GOOD. YOU ARE *WELL* EDUCATED.
KNOW, THEN, THAT MY *INITIAL* GOAL WAS SIMPLY THE RESTORATION OF CHINA TO THE *GLORY* IT SAVORED AT THE TIME OF MY BIRTH, AND *NOTHING MORE--*
--UNTIL THE *COMMUNIST REVOLUTION* AND *SIR DENIS NAYLAND SMITH* DESTROYED MUCH OF MY POWER.


IT *EMBITTERED* ME. I DO NOT *DENY* IT.
I WAS FORCED TO *REBUILD* THE SI-FAN WITHOUT PEKING'S *BACKING--* A TASK WHICH HAS COST ME MORE THAN *TWENTY YEARS--*
--BUT I HAVE *SUCCEEDED!*
NOW I STAND *ALONE,* THE *EMPEROR* OF AN INVISIBLE, WORLD-WIDE *EMPIRE,* OPPOSED TO *ALL* RECOGNIZED GOVERNMENTS--
--AND I SWEAR *TO* AND *BY* THE GODS OF CATHAY THAT I SHALL *DESTROY* THEM THIS TIME FOR THEIR MULISH *STUPIDITY!*
SURELY *NOW,* MY SON, YOU UNDERSTAND THE *WISDOM* AND *JUSTICE* OF MY COURSE.


FATHER... YOU SPEAK WITH ABSOLUTE *ASSURANCE,* COMPLETELY *CONVINCED* THAT YOUR VISION IS THE *ONLY* PROPER WAY--
--AND, LIKE *ALL* MEN WHO SPEAK THUS...
...YOU ARE *MAD!*


WHEN *NEXT* WE MEET, IT WILL BE AS *IMPLACABLE ENEMIES!*


SO BE IT, SHANG-CHI. LEAVE MY LAIR IN PEACE AND RESPECT.
BUT NEVER ATTEMPT, IN THE NEAR OR DISTANT FUTURE, TO ALTER THE DECISION YOU HAVE MADE HERE.
ONCE I PROMISED DR. PETRIE HE WOULD NEVER FEAR ME AGAIN, UPON MY HONOR AS A MANDARIN...
...YET MANDARINS HAVE NO PLACE IN THE VICIOUS STRUGGLE FOR WORLD SUPREMACY BEING WAGED TODAY!
EVERY EVIL ON THIS PLANET IS AT MY COMMAND...
...AND--SON OR NO--HENCEFORTH, THEY WILL ALL BE DIRECTED TOWARD YOUR...
...DOOM!
"I HEAR HIS WORDS AND BELIEVE THEM TRUE. HE IS A MAN WHO SHAPES THE WORLD, AND NOT VICE VERSA.
"HOW CAN I NOT BELIEVE--
"--WHEN I CONSIDER THE 'CHINA' I HAVE JUST STEPPED FROM--THE 'CHINA' IN WHICH HE WISHES TO DWELL--
"--THE 'CHINA' WHICH NO LONGER TRULY EXISTS--
"--EXCEPT AS A CONSTRUCT--
PV
"--CAREFULLY HIDDEN INSIDE AN OTHERWISE-INNOCENT OFFICE BUILDING, IN THE HEART OF NEW YORK CITY!
"FU MANCHU IS ALL-POWERFUL... AND I AM ONE MAN.
"SOME WOULD SAY I AM FORTUNATE, TO HAVE LEARNED OF THE DECEPTION PRACTICED UPON ME...
"--TO HAVE DIVORCED MYSELF FROM THIS EMPIRE OF EVIL...
"...BUT I HAVE NOT LOST AN EMPIRE.
"I HAVE LOST A FATHER...
"...AND IN ALL THE WORLD, I CAN NEVER FIND ANOTHER."
"SHANG-CHI" MEANS "THE RISING AND ADVANCING OF A SPIRIT."
NEXT:
MIDNIGHT BRINGS DARK DEATH!


SPECIAL MARVEL EDITION
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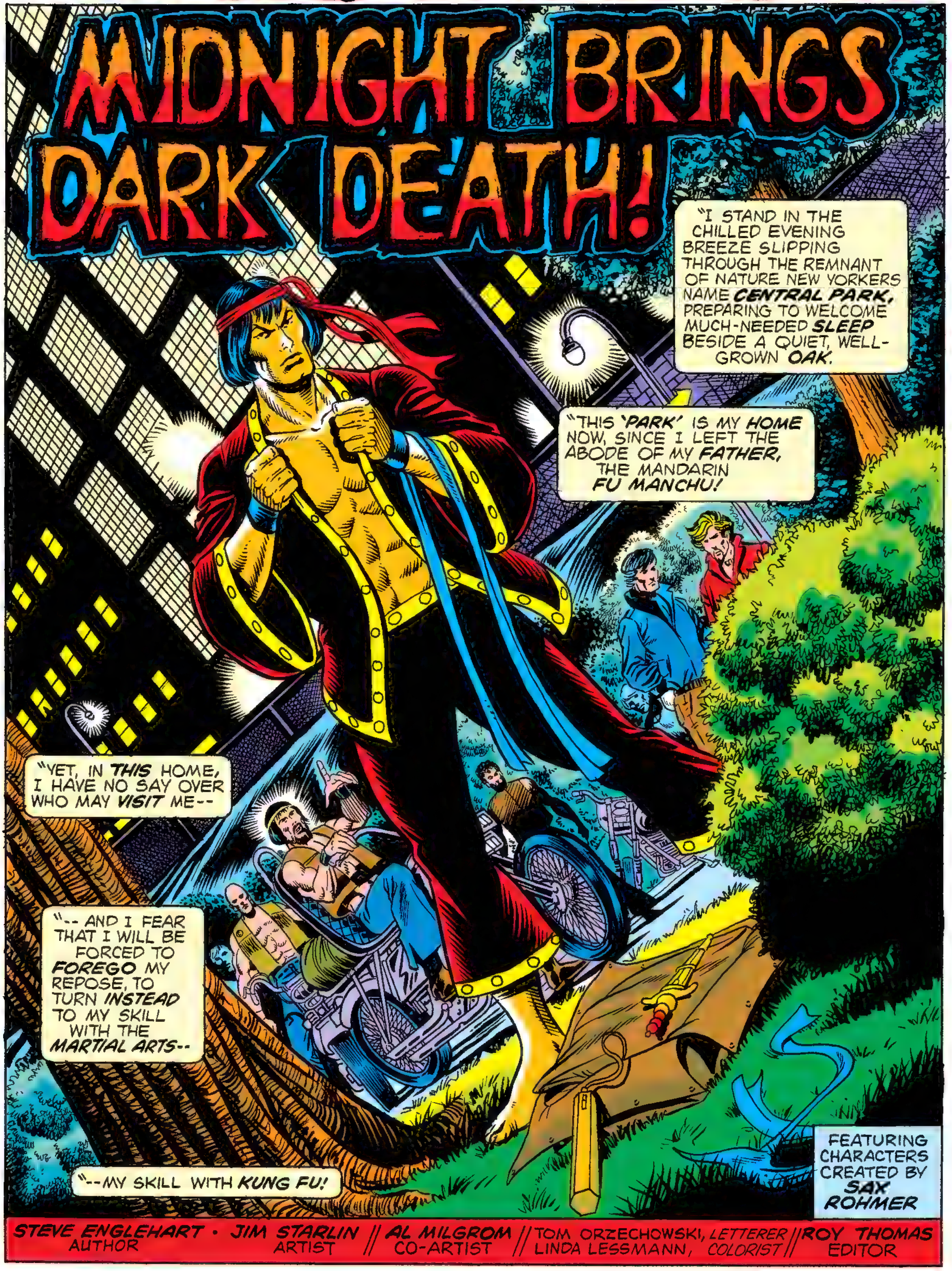
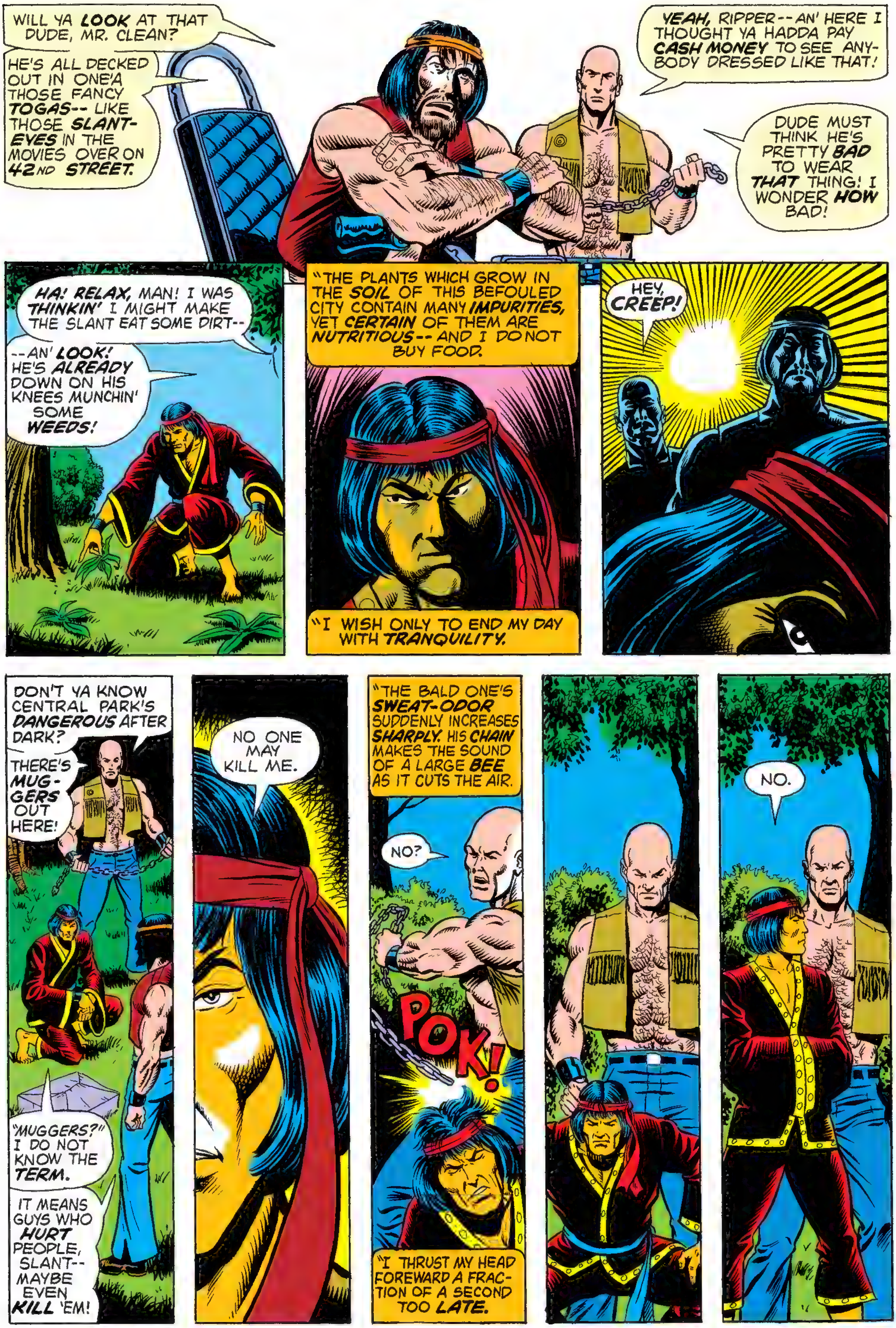
SPECIAL MARVEL EDITION™ FEATURING
THE HANDS OF SHANG-CHI,
MASTER OF KUNG FU™
THE MAN-MENACE CALLED... MIDNIGHT!
CAN EVEN SHANG-CHI'S FISTS OF FURY PREVAIL--AGAINST THE STARS OF DEATH?

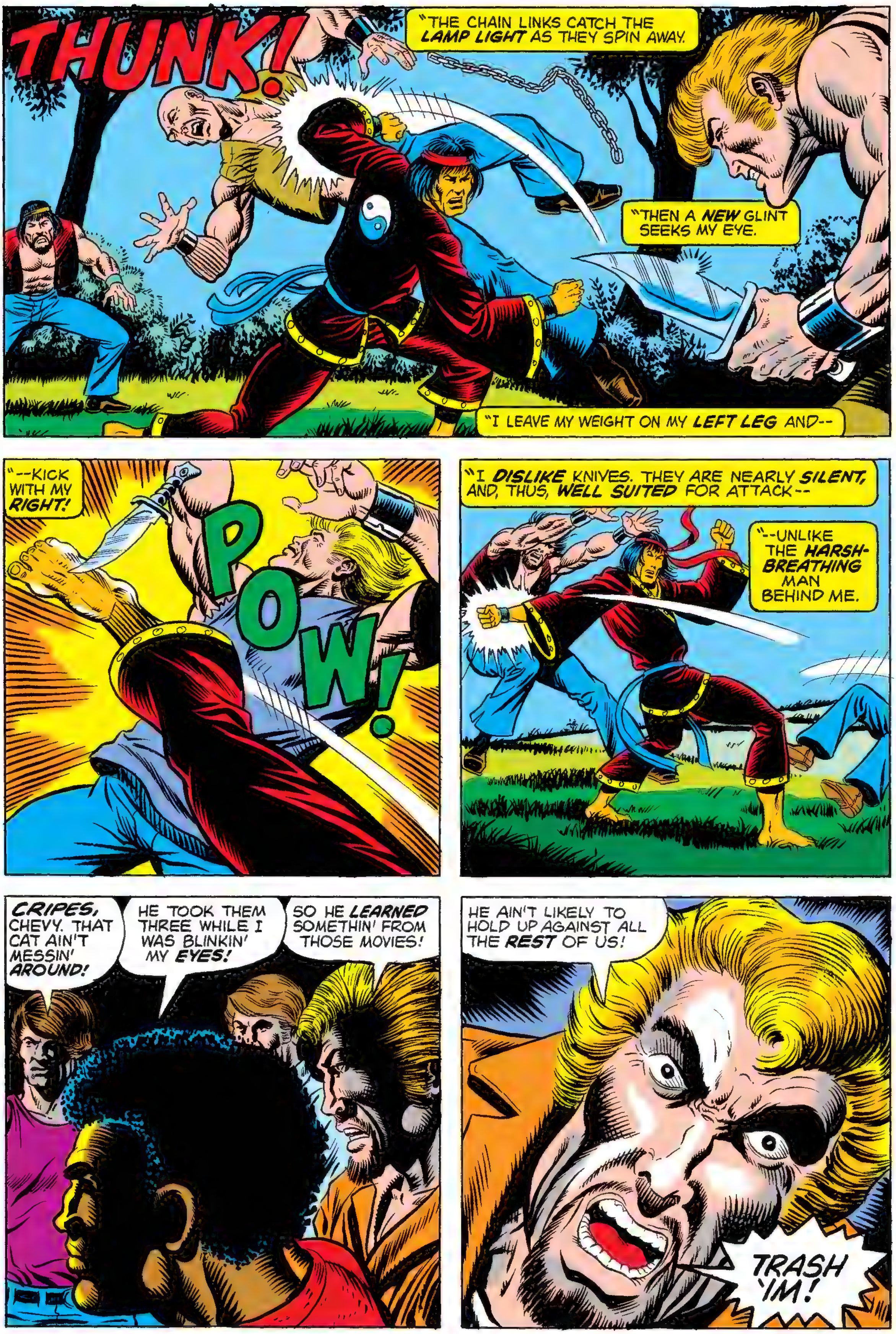
Stan Lee PRESENTS: **MASTER OF KUNG FU!** ™

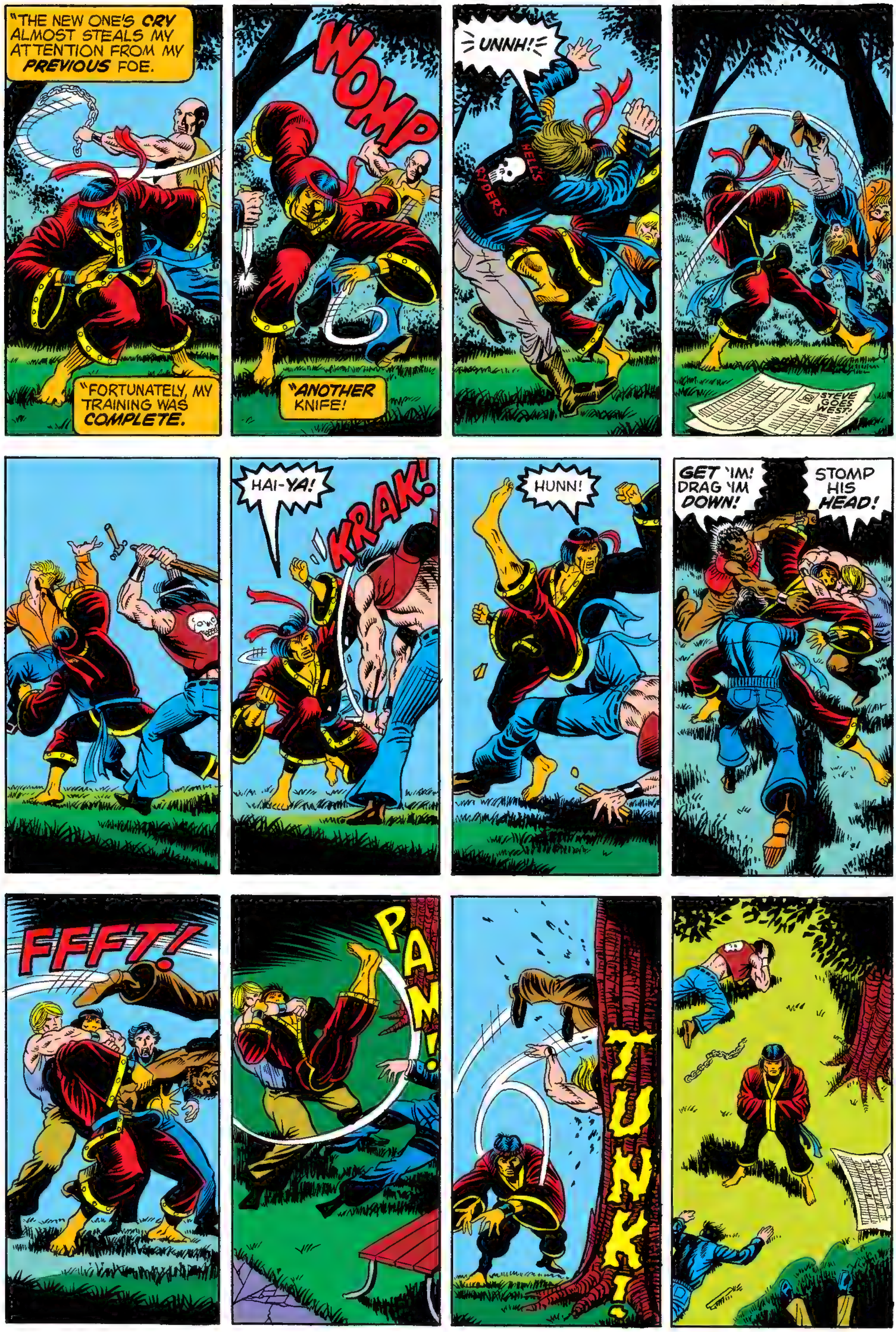
MIDNIGHT BRINGS DARK DEATH!

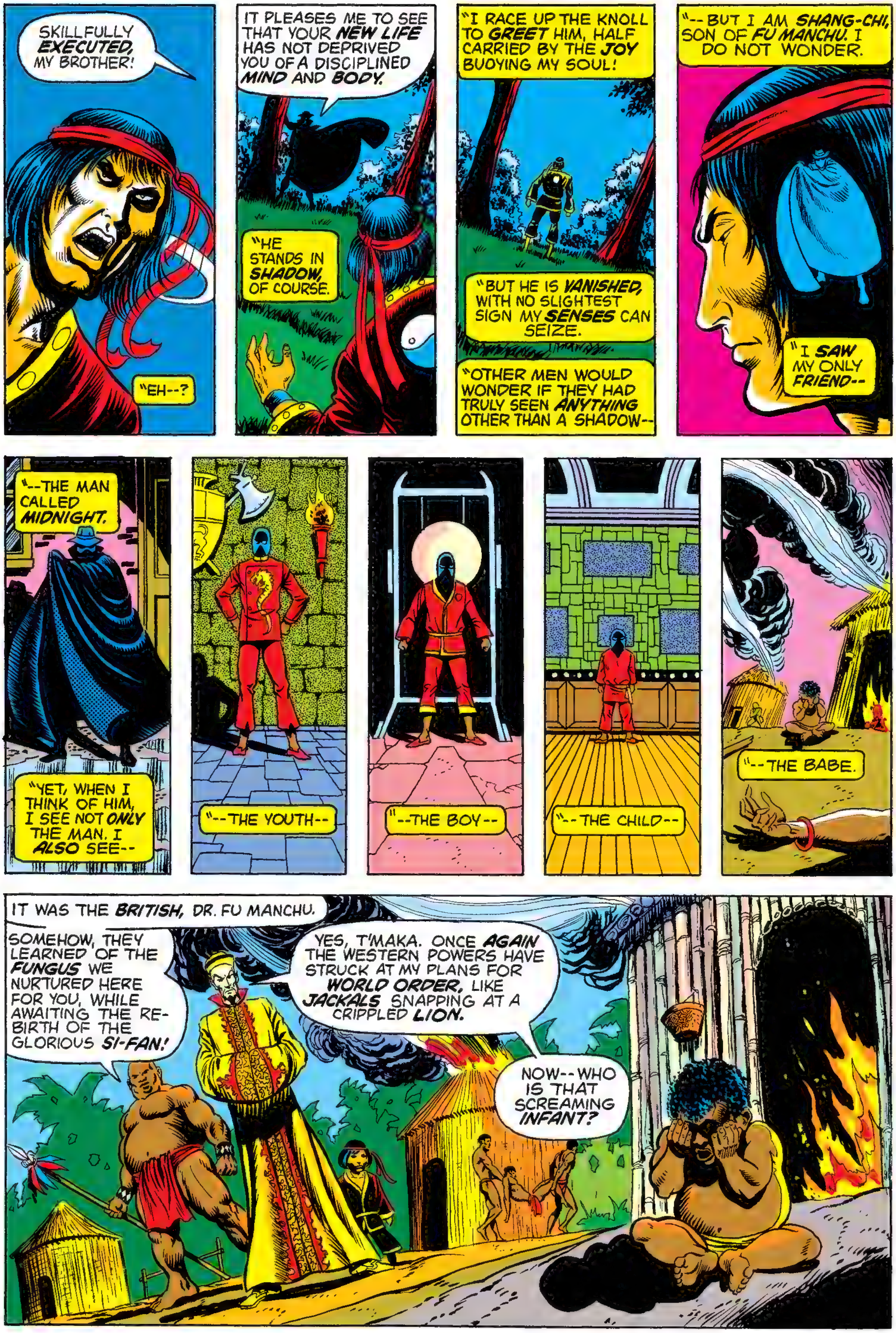

"I STAND IN THE CHILLED EVENING BREEZE SLIPPING THROUGH THE REMNANT OF NATURE NEW YORKERS NAME CENTRAL PARK, PREPARING TO WELCOME MUCH-NEEDED SLEEP BESIDE A QUIET, WELL-GROWN OAK.
"THIS 'PARK' IS MY HOME NOW, SINCE I LEFT THE ABODE OF MY FATHER, THE MANDARIN FU MANCHU!
"YET, IN THIS HOME, I HAVE NO SAY OVER WHO MAY VISIT ME--
"-- AND I FEAR THAT I WILL BE FORCED TO FOREGO MY REPOSE, TO TURN INSTEAD TO MY SKILL WITH THE MARTIAL ARTS--
"--MY SKILL WITH KUNG FU!
FEATURING CHARACTERS CREATED BY SAX ROHMER

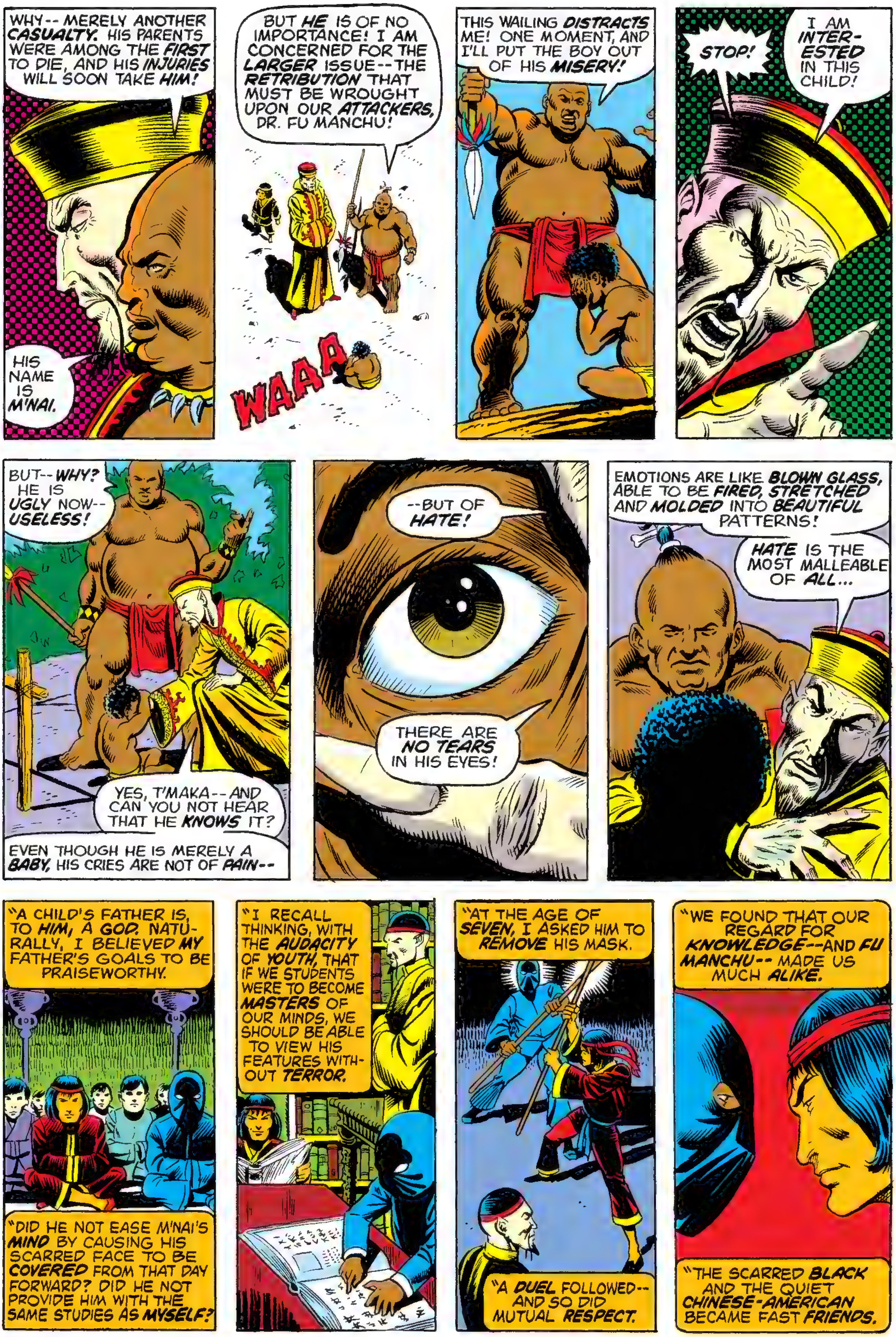
STEVE ENGLEHART · **JIM STARLIN** // **AL MILGROM** // TOM ORZECHOWSKI, *LETTERER* // **ROY THOMAS**
AUTHOR · ARTIST // CO-ARTIST // LINDA LESSMANN, *COLORIST* // EDITOR

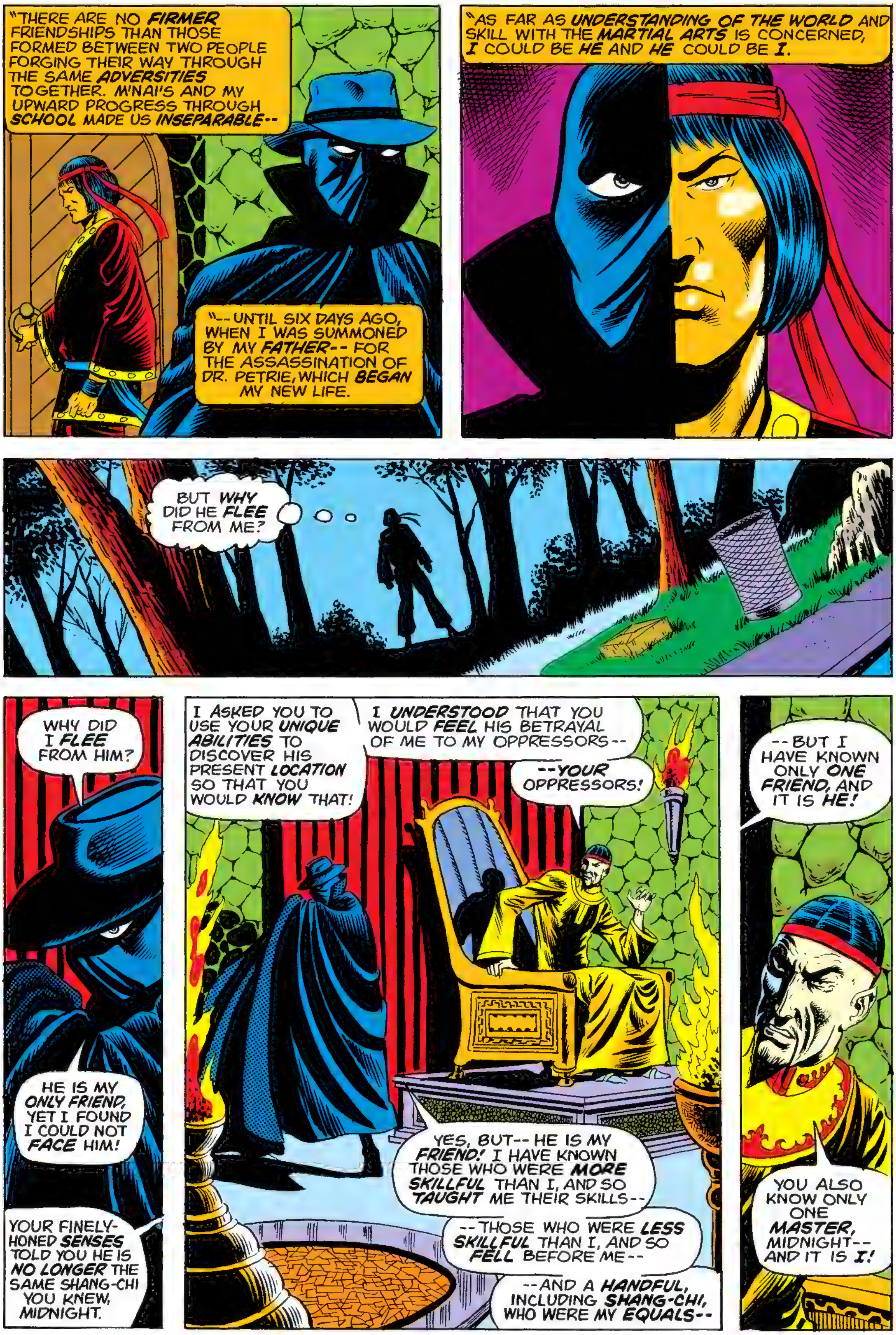

WILL YA LOOK AT THAT DUDE, MR. CLEAN?
HE'S ALL DECKED OUT IN ONE'A THOSE FANCY TOGAS-- LIKE THOSE SLANT-EYES IN THE MOVIES OVER ON 42ND STREET.
YEAH, RIPPER-- AN' HERE I THOUGHT YA HADDA PAY CASH MONEY TO SEE ANYBODY DRESSED LIKE THAT!
DUDE MUST THINK HE'S PRETTY BAD TO WEAR THAT THING! I WONDER HOW BAD!
HA! RELAX, MAN! I WAS THINKIN' I MIGHT MAKE THE SLANT EAT SOME DIRT--
--AN' LOOK! HE'S ALREADY DOWN ON HIS KNEES MUNCHIN' SOME WEEDS!
"THE PLANTS WHICH GROW IN THE SOIL OF THIS BEFOULED CITY CONTAIN MANY IMPURITIES, YET CERTAIN OF THEM ARE NUTRITIOUS-- AND I DO NOT BUY FOOD.
"I WISH ONLY TO END MY DAY WITH TRANQUILITY.
HEY, CREEP!
DON'T YA KNOW CENTRAL PARK'S DANGEROUS AFTER DARK?
THERE'S MUGGERS OUT HERE!
"MUGGERS?" I DO NOT KNOW THE TERM.
IT MEANS GUYS WHO HURT PEOPLE, SLANT-- MAYBE EVEN KILL 'EM!
NO ONE MAY KILL ME.
"THE BALD ONE'S SWEAT-ODOR SUDDENLY INCREASES SHARPLY. HIS CHAIN MAKES THE SOUND OF A LARGE BEE AS IT CUTS THE AIR.
NO?
POK!
"I THRUST MY HEAD FOREWARD A FRACTION OF A SECOND TOO LATE.
NO.

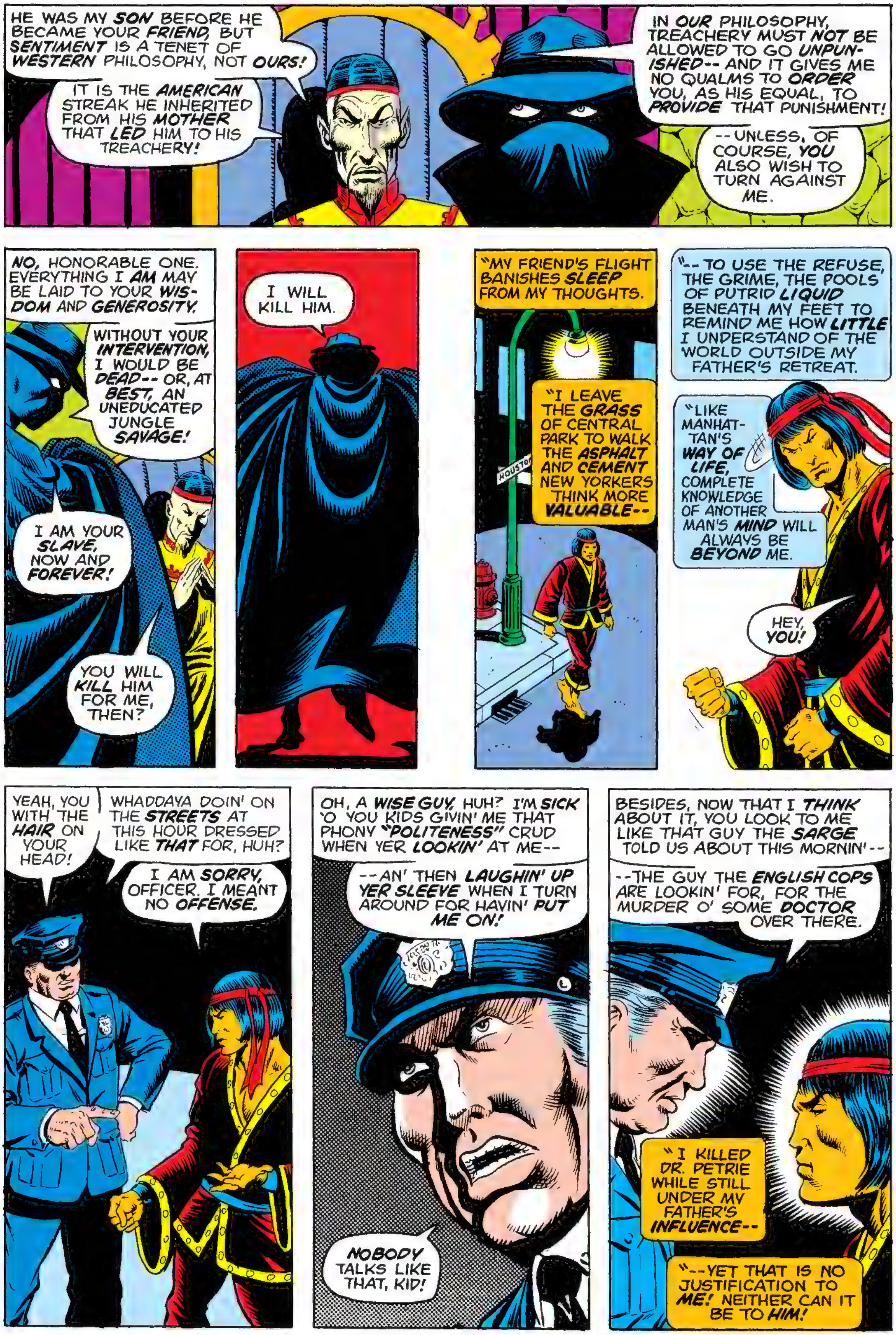

THUNK!
"THE CHAIN LINKS CATCH THE LAMP LIGHT AS THEY SPIN AWAY.
"THEN A NEW GLINT SEEKS MY EYE.
"I LEAVE MY WEIGHT ON MY LEFT LEG AND--
"--KICK WITH MY RIGHT!
POW!
"I DISLIKE KNIVES. THEY ARE NEARLY SILENT, AND, THUS, WELL SUITED FOR ATTACK--
"--UNLIKE THE HARSH-BREATHING MAN BEHIND ME.
CRIPES, CHEVY. THAT CAT AIN'T MESSIN' AROUND!
HE TOOK THEM THREE WHILE I WAS BLINKIN' MY EYES!
SO HE LEARNED SOMETHIN' FROM THOSE MOVIES!
HE AIN'T LIKELY TO HOLD UP AGAINST ALL THE REST OF US!
TRASH 'IM!

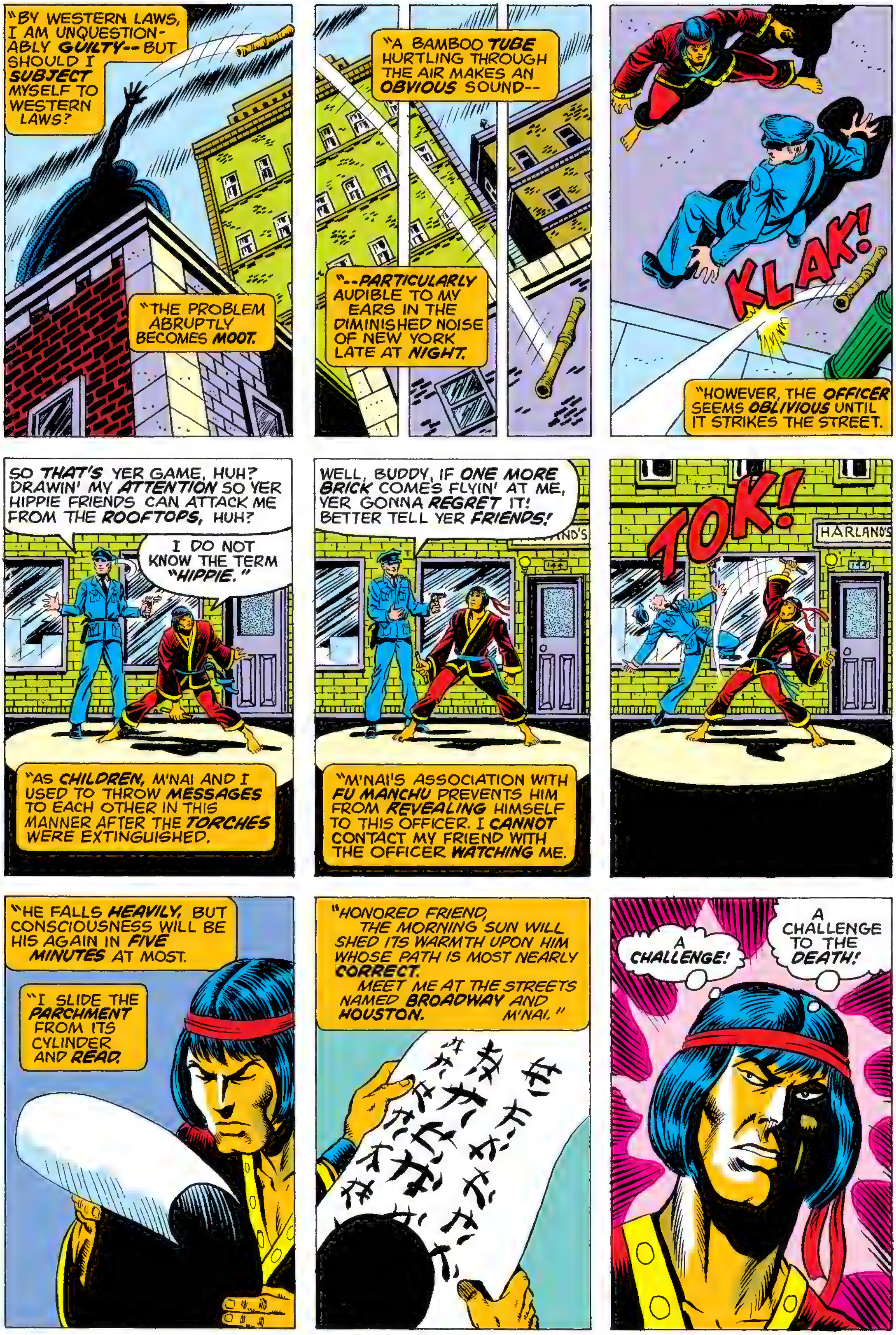

"THE NEW ONE'S CRY ALMOST STEALS MY ATTENTION FROM MY PREVIOUS FOE.
"FORTUNATELY, MY TRAINING WAS COMPLETE.
WOMP
"ANOTHER KNIFE!
UNNH!
HELL'S RYDERS
STEVE GOES WEST?
HAI-YA!
KRAK!
HUNN!
GET 'IM! DRAG 'IM DOWN!
STOMP HIS HEAD!
FFFT!
PAM!
TUNK!

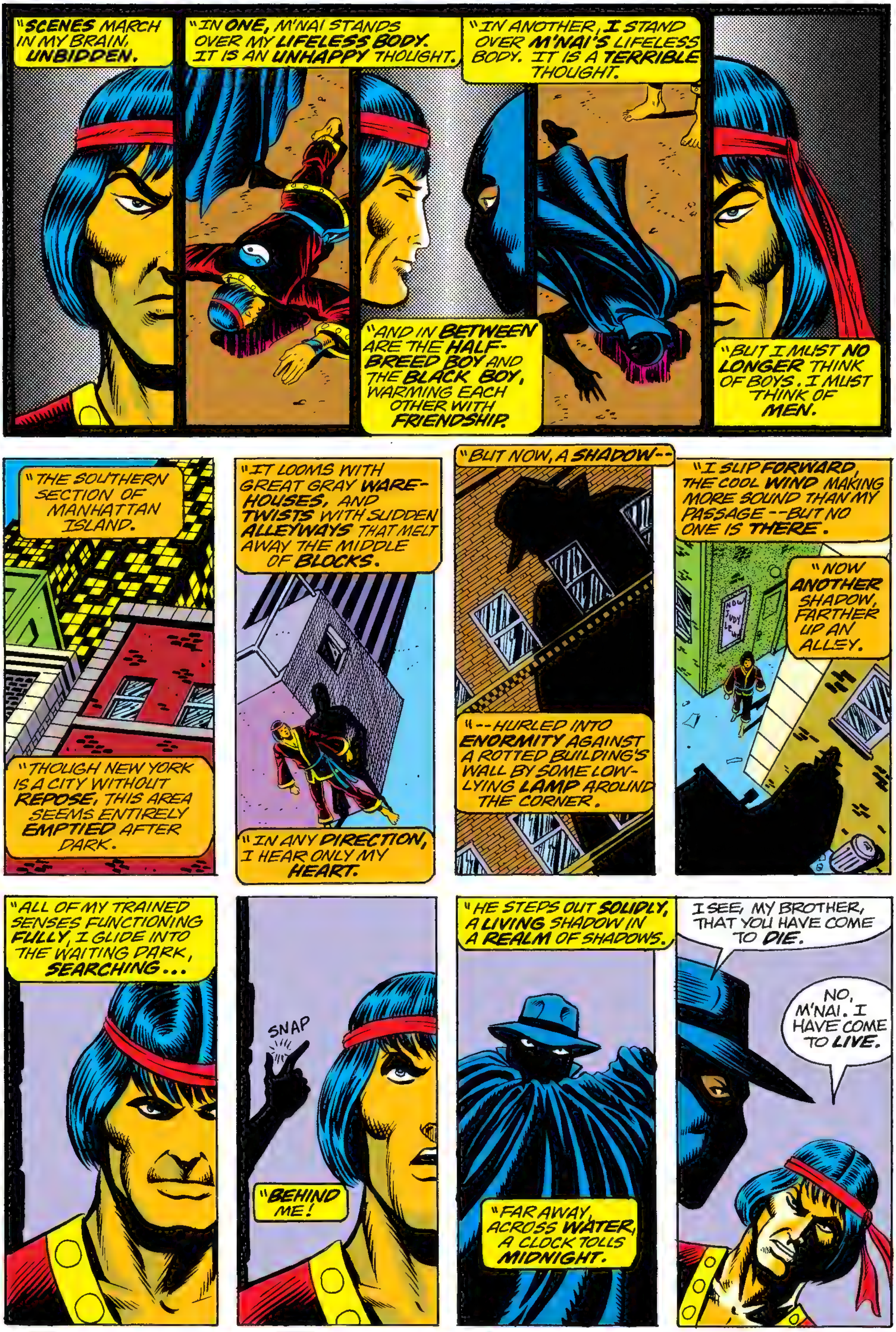

SKILLFULLY EXECUTED, MY BROTHER!
"EH--?
IT PLEASES ME TO SEE THAT YOUR NEW LIFE HAS NOT DEPRIVED YOU OF A DISCIPLINED MIND AND BODY.
"HE STANDS IN SHADOW, OF COURSE.
"I RACE UP THE KNOLL TO GREET HIM, HALF CARRIED BY THE JOY BUOYING MY SOUL!
"BUT HE IS VANISHED, WITH NO SLIGHTEST SIGN MY SENSES CAN SEIZE.
"OTHER MEN WOULD WONDER IF THEY HAD TRULY SEEN ANYTHING OTHER THAN A SHADOW--
"--BUT I AM SHANG-CHI, SON OF FU MANCHU. I DO NOT WONDER.
"I SAW MY ONLY FRIEND--
"--THE MAN CALLED MIDNIGHT.
"YET, WHEN I THINK OF HIM, I SEE NOT ONLY THE MAN. I ALSO SEE--
"--THE YOUTH--
"--THE BOY--
"--THE CHILD--
"--THE BABE.
IT WAS THE BRITISH, DR. FU MANCHU.
SOMEHOW, THEY LEARNED OF THE FUNGUS WE NURTURED HERE FOR YOU, WHILE AWAITING THE RE-BIRTH OF THE GLORIOUS SI-FAN!
YES, T'MAKA. ONCE AGAIN THE WESTERN POWERS HAVE STRUCK AT MY PLANS FOR WORLD ORDER, LIKE JACKALS SNAPPING AT A CRIPPLED LION.
NOW--WHO IS THAT SCREAMING INFANT?

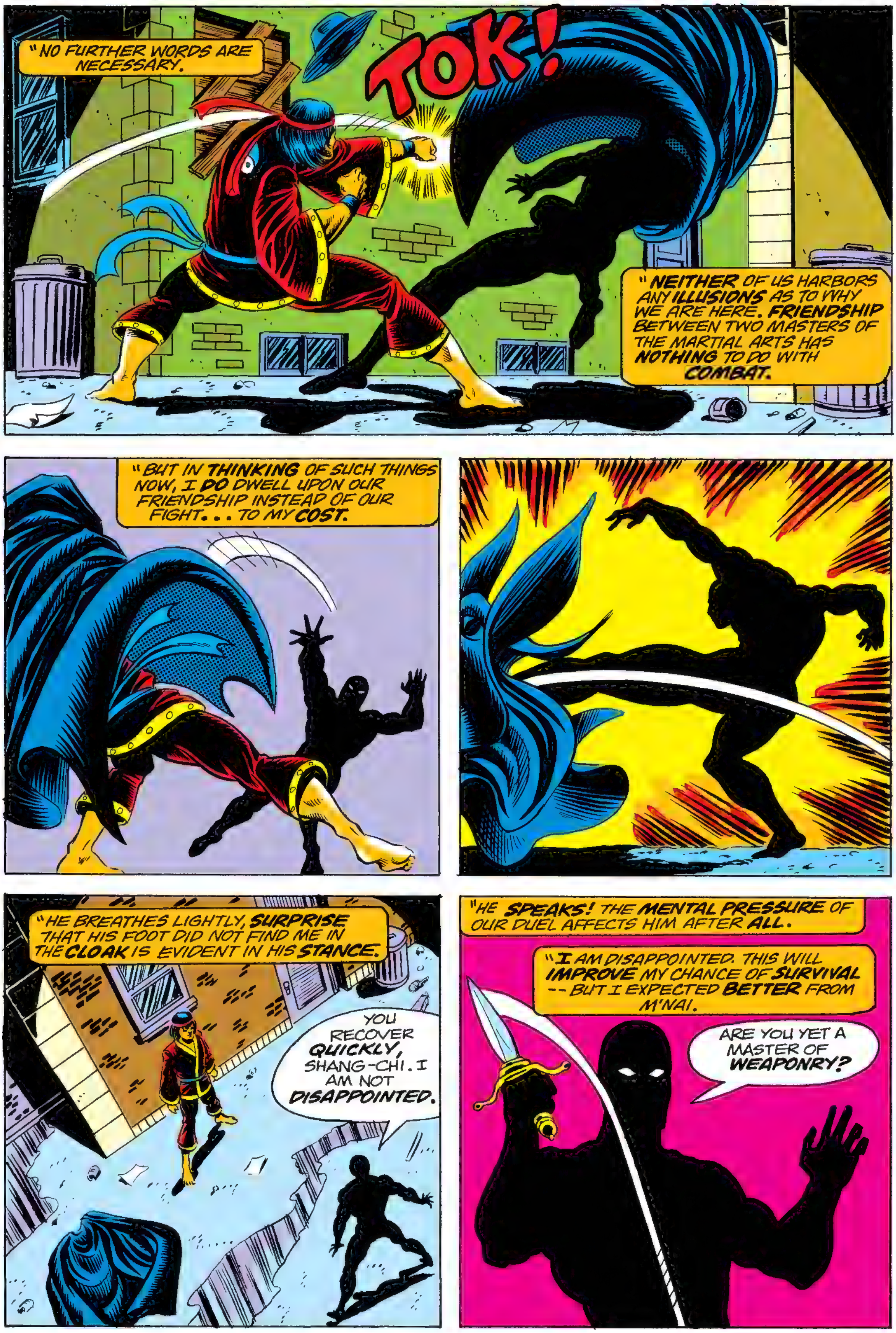

WHY-- MERELY ANOTHER CASUALTY. HIS PARENTS WERE AMONG THE FIRST TO DIE, AND HIS INJURIES WILL SOON TAKE HIM!
HIS NAME IS M'NAI.
BUT HE IS OF NO IMPORTANCE! I AM CONCERNED FOR THE LARGER ISSUE--THE RETRIBUTION THAT MUST BE WROUGHT UPON OUR ATTACKERS, DR. FU MANCHU!
WAAA
THIS WAILING DISTRACTS ME! ONE MOMENT, AND I'LL PUT THE BOY OUT OF HIS MISERY!
STOP!
I AM INTERESTED IN THIS CHILD!
BUT--WHY? HE IS UGLY NOW-- USELESS!
YES, T'MAKA--AND CAN YOU NOT HEAR THAT HE KNOWS IT?
EVEN THOUGH HE IS MERELY A BABY, HIS CRIES ARE NOT OF PAIN--
--BUT OF HATE!
THERE ARE NO TEARS IN HIS EYES!
EMOTIONS ARE LIKE BLOWN GLASS, ABLE TO BE FIRED, STRETCHED AND MOLDED INTO BEAUTIFUL PATTERNS!
HATE IS THE MOST MALLEABLE OF ALL...
"A CHILD'S FATHER IS, TO HIM, A GOD. NATURALLY, I BELIEVED MY FATHER'S GOALS TO BE PRAISEWORTHY.
"DID HE NOT EASE M'NAI'S MIND BY CAUSING HIS SCARRED FACE TO BE COVERED FROM THAT DAY FORWARD? DID HE NOT PROVIDE HIM WITH THE SAME STUDIES AS MYSELF?
"I RECALL THINKING, WITH THE AUDACITY OF YOUTH, THAT IF WE STUDENTS WERE TO BECOME MASTERS OF OUR MINDS, WE SHOULD BE ABLE TO VIEW HIS FEATURES WITHOUT TERROR.
"AT THE AGE OF SEVEN, I ASKED HIM TO REMOVE HIS MASK.
"A DUEL FOLLOWED-- AND SO DID MUTUAL RESPECT.
"WE FOUND THAT OUR REGARD FOR KNOWLEDGE--AND FU MANCHU-- MADE US MUCH ALIKE.
"THE SCARRED BLACK AND THE QUIET CHINESE-AMERICAN BECAME FAST FRIENDS.

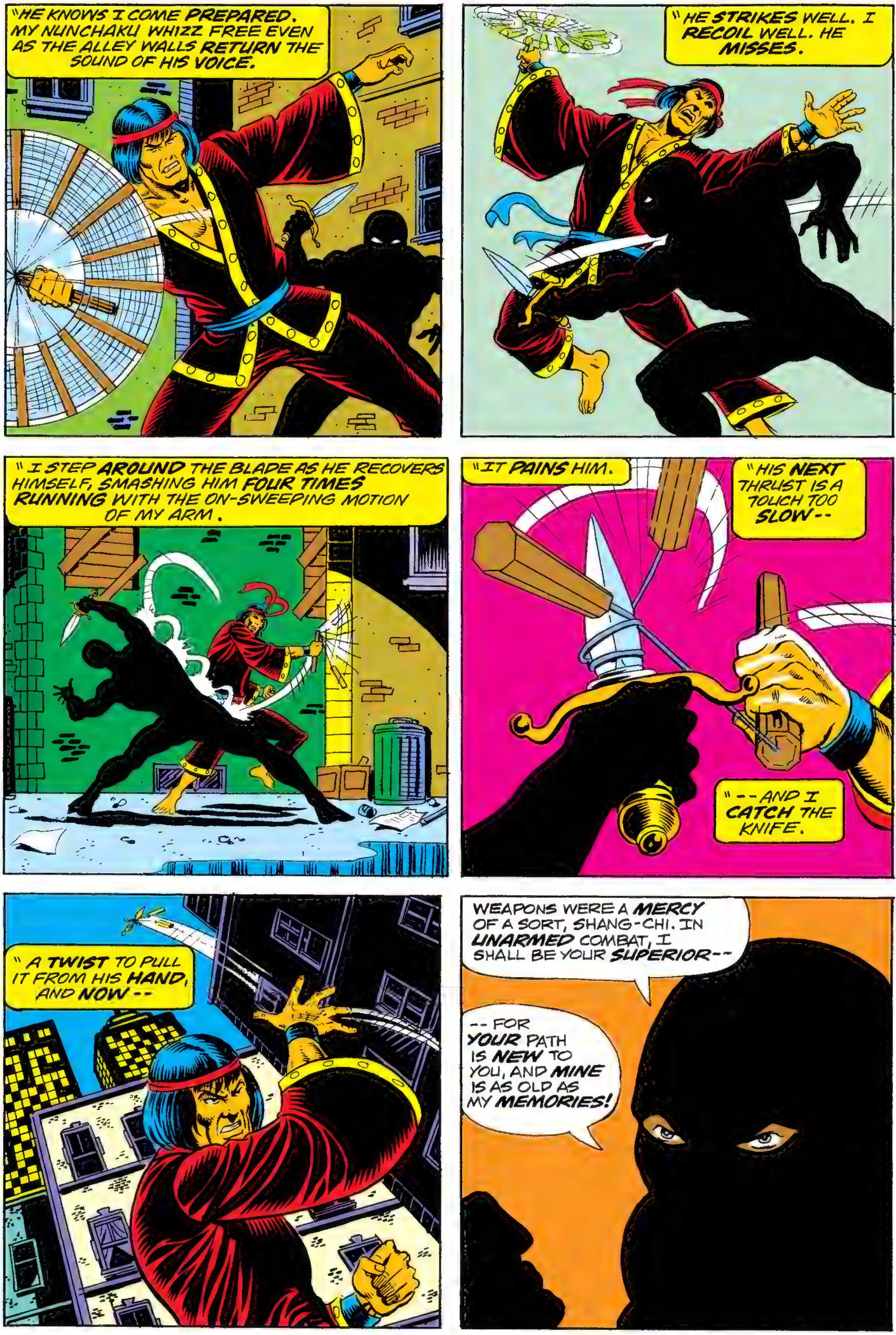

"THERE ARE NO FIRMER FRIENDSHIPS THAN THOSE FORMED BETWEEN TWO PEOPLE FORGING THEIR WAY THROUGH THE SAME ADVERSITIES TOGETHER. M'NAI'S AND MY UPWARD PROGRESS THROUGH SCHOOL MADE US INSEPARABLE--
"--UNTIL SIX DAYS AGO, WHEN I WAS SUMMONED BY MY FATHER-- FOR THE ASSASSINATION OF DR. PETRIE, WHICH BEGAN MY NEW LIFE.
"AS FAR AS UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD AND SKILL WITH THE MARTIAL ARTS IS CONCERNED, I COULD BE HE AND HE COULD BE I.
BUT WHY DID HE FLEE FROM ME?
WHY DID I FLEE FROM HIM?
HE IS MY ONLY FRIEND, YET I FOUND I COULD NOT FACE HIM!
YOUR FINELY-HONED SENSES TOLD YOU HE IS NO LONGER THE SAME SHANG-CHI YOU KNEW, MIDNIGHT.
I ASKED YOU TO USE YOUR UNIQUE ABILITIES TO DISCOVER HIS PRESENT LOCATION SO THAT YOU WOULD KNOW THAT!
I UNDERSTOOD THAT YOU WOULD FEEL HIS BETRAYAL OF ME TO MY OPPRESSORS--
--YOUR OPPRESSORS!
YES, BUT-- HE IS MY FRIEND! I HAVE KNOWN THOSE WHO WERE MORE SKILLFUL THAN I, AND SO TAUGHT ME THEIR SKILLS--
--THOSE WHO WERE LESS SKILLFUL THAN I, AND SO FELL BEFORE ME--
--AND A HANDFUL, INCLUDING SHANG-CHI, WHO WERE MY EQUALS--
--BUT I HAVE KNOWN ONLY ONE FRIEND, AND IT IS HE!
YOU ALSO KNOW ONLY ONE MASTER, MIDNIGHT-- AND IT IS I!

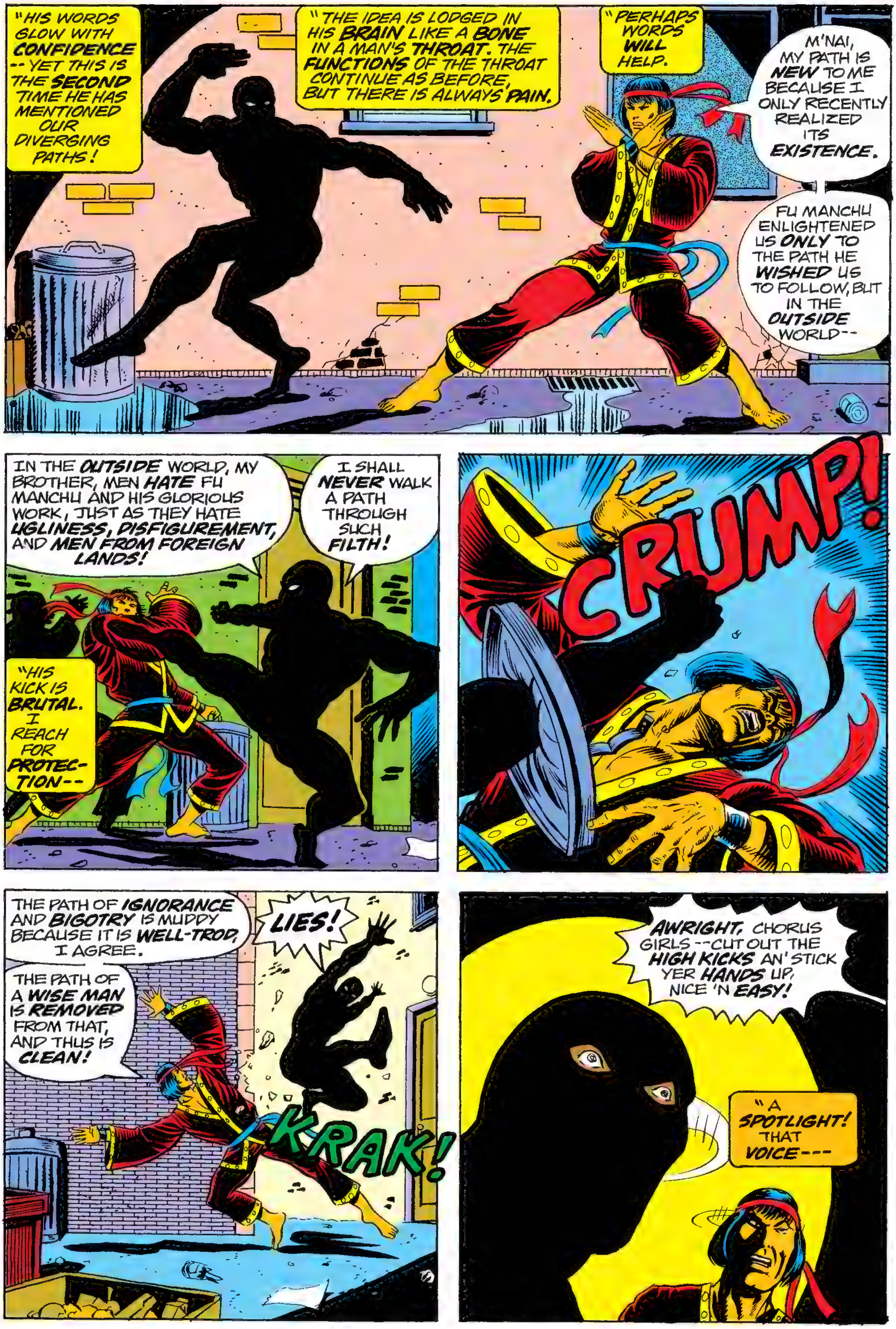

HE WAS MY SON BEFORE HE BECAME YOUR FRIEND, BUT SENTIMENT IS A TENET OF WESTERN PHILOSOPHY, NOT OURS!
IT IS THE AMERICAN STREAK HE INHERITED FROM HIS MOTHER THAT LED HIM TO HIS TREACHERY!
IN OUR PHILOSOPHY, TREACHERY MUST NOT BE ALLOWED TO GO UNPUNISHED-- AND IT GIVES ME NO QUALMS TO ORDER YOU, AS HIS EQUAL, TO PROVIDE THAT PUNISHMENT!
--UNLESS, OF COURSE, YOU ALSO WISH TO TURN AGAINST ME.
NO, HONORABLE ONE. EVERYTHING I AM MAY BE LAID TO YOUR WISDOM AND GENEROSITY.
WITHOUT YOUR INTERVENTION, I WOULD BE DEAD-- OR, AT BEST, AN UNEDUCATED JUNGLE SAVAGE!
I AM YOUR SLAVE, NOW AND FOREVER!
YOU WILL KILL HIM FOR ME, THEN?
I WILL KILL HIM.
"MY FRIEND'S FLIGHT BANISHES SLEEP FROM MY THOUGHTS.
"I LEAVE THE GRASS OF CENTRAL PARK TO WALK THE ASPHALT AND CEMENT NEW YORKERS THINK MORE VALUABLE--
HOUSTON
"--TO USE THE REFUSE, THE GRIME, THE POOLS OF PUTRID LIQUID BENEATH MY FEET TO REMIND ME HOW LITTLE I UNDERSTAND OF THE WORLD OUTSIDE MY FATHER'S RETREAT.
"LIKE MANHATTAN'S WAY OF LIFE, COMPLETE KNOWLEDGE OF ANOTHER MAN'S MIND WILL ALWAYS BE BEYOND ME.
HEY, YOU!
YEAH, YOU WITH THE HAIR ON YOUR HEAD!
WHADDAYA DOIN' ON THE STREETS AT THIS HOUR DRESSED LIKE THAT FOR, HUH?
I AM SORRY, OFFICER. I MEANT NO OFFENSE.
OH, A WISE GUY, HUH? I'M SICK 'O YOU KIDS GIVIN' ME THAT PHONY "POLITENESS" CRUD WHEN YER LOOKIN' AT ME--
--AN' THEN LAUGHIN' UP YER SLEEVE WHEN I TURN AROUND FOR HAVIN' PUT ME ON!
NOBODY TALKS LIKE THAT, KID!
BESIDES, NOW THAT I THINK ABOUT IT, YOU LOOK TO ME LIKE THAT GUY THE SARGE TOLD US ABOUT THIS MORNIN'--
--THE GUY THE ENGLISH COPS ARE LOOKIN' FOR, FOR THE MURDER O' SOME DOCTOR OVER THERE.
"I KILLED DR. PETRIE WHILE STILL UNDER MY FATHER'S INFLUENCE--
"--YET THAT IS NO JUSTIFICATION TO ME! NEITHER CAN IT BE TO HIM!

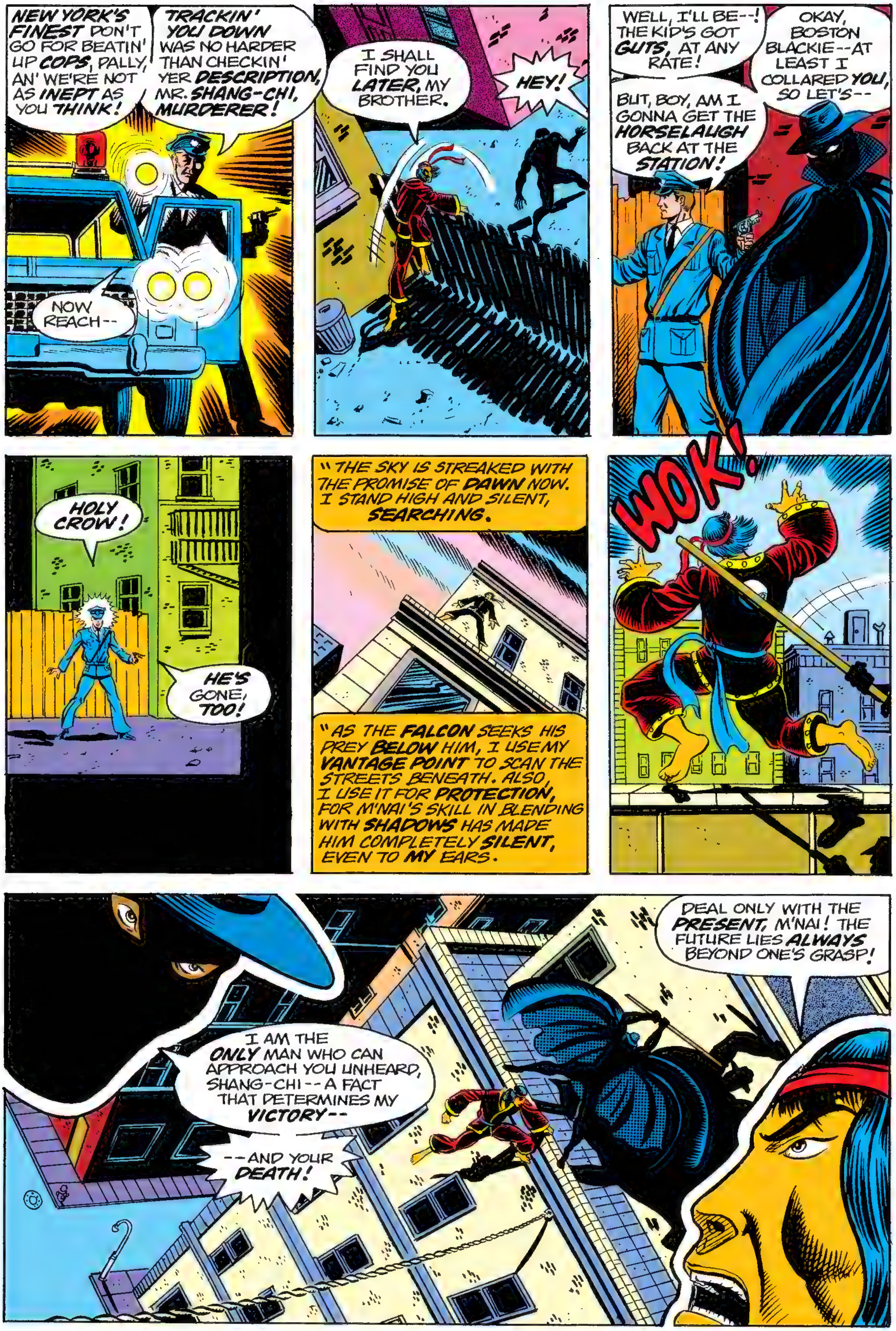

"BY WESTERN LAWS, I AM UNQUESTIONABLY GUILTY-- BUT SHOULD I SUBJECT MYSELF TO WESTERN LAWS?
"THE PROBLEM ABRUPTLY BECOMES MOOT.
"A BAMBOO TUBE HURTLING THROUGH THE AIR MAKES AN OBVIOUS SOUND--
"--PARTICULARLY AUDIBLE TO MY EARS IN THE DIMINISHED NOISE OF NEW YORK LATE AT NIGHT.
KLAK!
"HOWEVER, THE OFFICER SEEMS OBLIVIOUS UNTIL IT STRIKES THE STREET.
SO THAT'S YER GAME, HUH? DRAWIN' MY ATTENTION SO YER HIPPIE FRIENDS CAN ATTACK ME FROM THE ROOFTOPS, HUH?
I DO NOT KNOW THE TERM "HIPPIE."
"AS CHILDREN, M'NAI AND I USED TO THROW MESSAGES TO EACH OTHER IN THIS MANNER AFTER THE TORCHES WERE EXTINGUISHED.
WELL, BUDDY, IF ONE MORE BRICK COMES FLYIN' AT ME, YER GONNA REGRET IT! BETTER TELL YER FRIENDS!
"M'NAI'S ASSOCIATION WITH FU MANCHU PREVENTS HIM FROM REVEALING HIMSELF TO THIS OFFICER. I CANNOT CONTACT MY FRIEND WITH THE OFFICER WATCHING ME.
TOK!
HARLAND'S
144
"HE FALLS HEAVILY, BUT CONSCIOUSNESS WILL BE HIS AGAIN IN FIVE MINUTES AT MOST.
"I SLIDE THE PARCHMENT FROM ITS CYLINDER AND READ.
"HONORED FRIEND, THE MORNING SUN WILL SHED ITS WARMTH UPON HIM WHOSE PATH IS MOST NEARLY CORRECT. MEET ME AT THE STREETS NAMED BROADWAY AND HOUSTON. M'NAI."
A CHALLENGE!
A CHALLENGE TO THE DEATH!

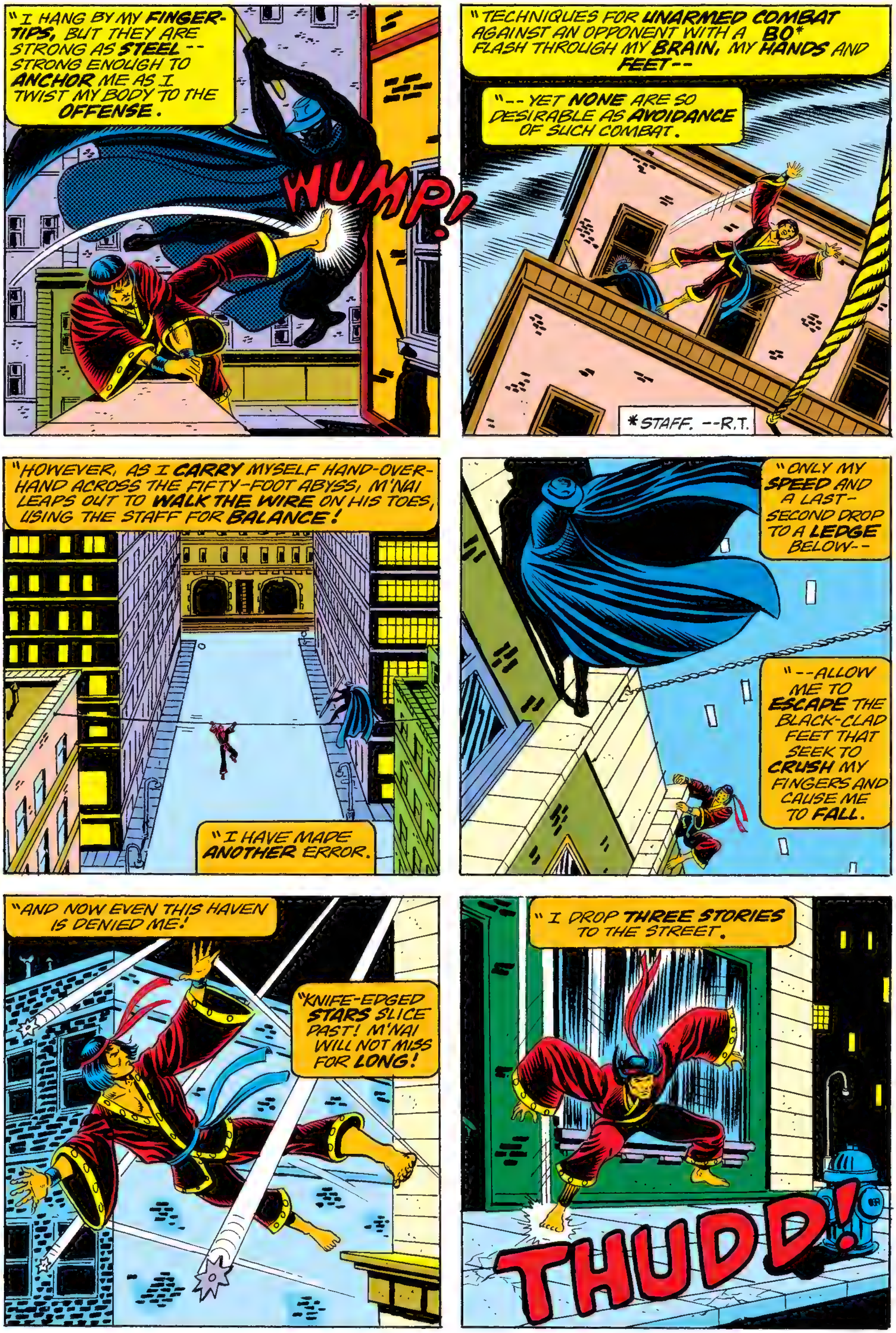

"SCENES MARCH IN MY BRAIN, UNBIDDEN.
"IN ONE, M'NAI STANDS OVER MY LIFELESS BODY. IT IS AN UNHAPPY THOUGHT.
"IN ANOTHER, I STAND OVER M'NAI'S LIFELESS BODY. IT IS A TERRIBLE THOUGHT.
"AND IN BETWEEN ARE THE HALF-BREED BOY AND THE BLACK BOY, WARMING EACH OTHER WITH FRIENDSHIP.
"BUT I MUST NO LONGER THINK OF BOYS. I MUST THINK OF MEN.
"THE SOUTHERN SECTION OF MANHATTAN ISLAND.
"THOUGH NEW YORK IS A CITY WITHOUT REPOSE, THIS AREA SEEMS ENTIRELY EMPTIED AFTER DARK.
"IT LOOMS WITH GREAT GRAY WAREHOUSES, AND TWISTS WITH SUDDEN ALLEYWAYS THAT MELT AWAY THE MIDDLE OF BLOCKS.
"IN ANY DIRECTION, I HEAR ONLY MY HEART.
"BUT NOW, A SHADOW--
"--HURLED INTO ENORMITY AGAINST A ROTTED BUILDING'S WALL BY SOME LOW-LYING LAMP AROUND THE CORNER.
"I SLIP FORWARD, THE COOL WIND MAKING MORE SOUND THAN MY PASSAGE--BUT NO ONE IS THERE.
"NOW ANOTHER SHADOW, FARTHER UP AN ALLEY.
NOW JUDY LE...
"ALL OF MY TRAINED SENSES FUNCTIONING FULLY, I GLIDE INTO THE WAITING DARK, SEARCHING...
SNAP
"BEHIND ME!
"HE STEPS OUT SOLIDLY, A LIVING SHADOW IN A REALM OF SHADOWS.
"FAR AWAY, ACROSS WATER, A CLOCK TOLLS MIDNIGHT.
I SEE, MY BROTHER, THAT YOU HAVE COME TO DIE.
NO, M'NAI. I HAVE COME TO LIVE.

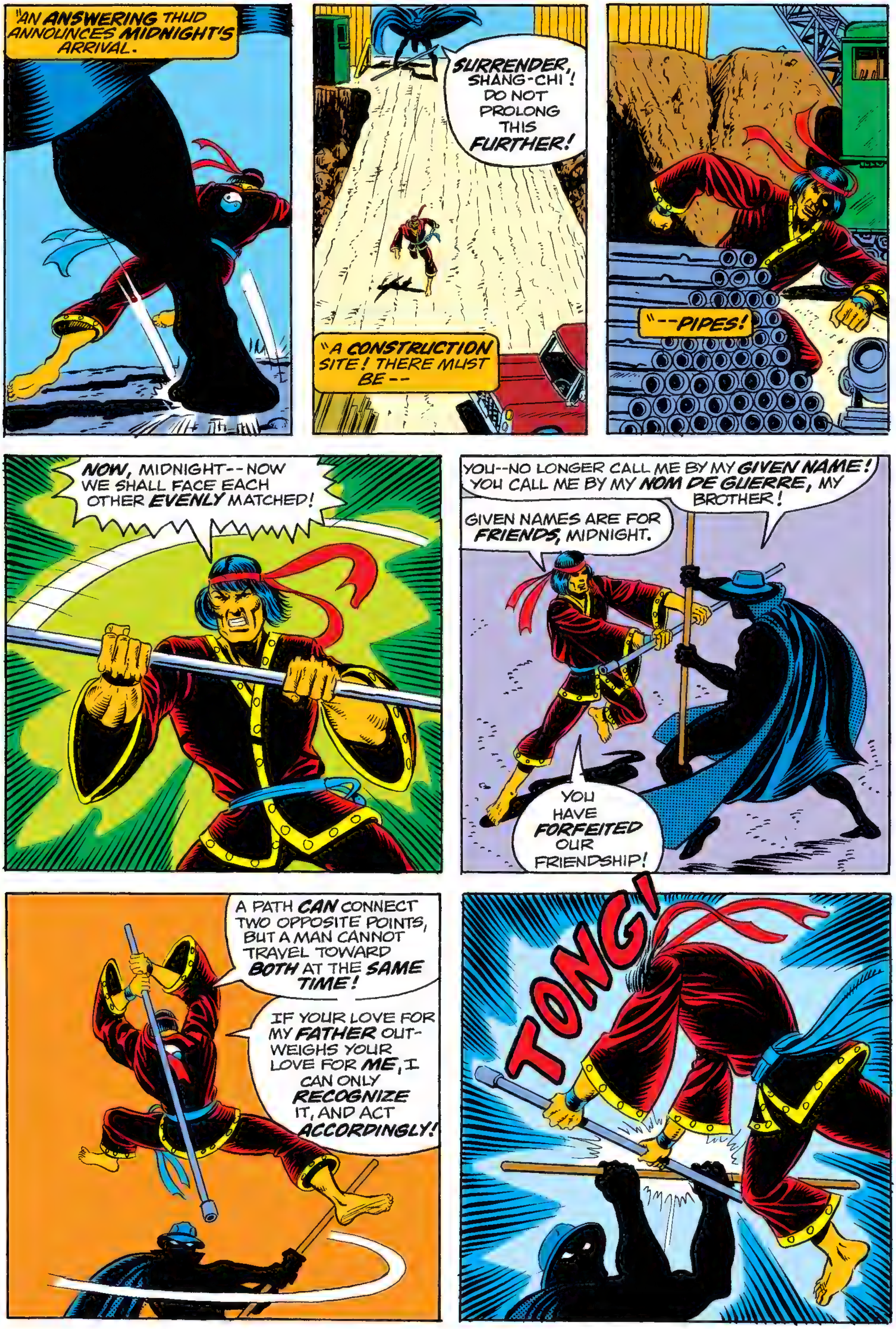

"NO FURTHER WORDS ARE NECESSARY.
TOK!
"NEITHER OF US HARBORS ANY ILLUSIONS AS TO WHY WE ARE HERE. FRIENDSHIP BETWEEN TWO MASTERS OF THE MARTIAL ARTS HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH COMBAT.
"BUT IN THINKING OF SUCH THINGS NOW, I DO DWELL UPON OUR FRIENDSHIP INSTEAD OF OUR FIGHT... TO MY COST.
"HE BREATHES LIGHTLY, SURPRISE THAT HIS FOOT DID NOT FIND ME IN THE CLOAK IS EVIDENT IN HIS STANCE.
YOU RECOVER QUICKLY, SHANG-CHI. I AM NOT DISAPPOINTED.
"HE SPEAKS! THE MENTAL PRESSURE OF OUR DUEL AFFECTS HIM AFTER ALL.
"I AM DISAPPOINTED. THIS WILL IMPROVE MY CHANCE OF SURVIVAL -- BUT I EXPECTED BETTER FROM M'NAI.
ARE YOU YET A MASTER OF WEAPONRY?

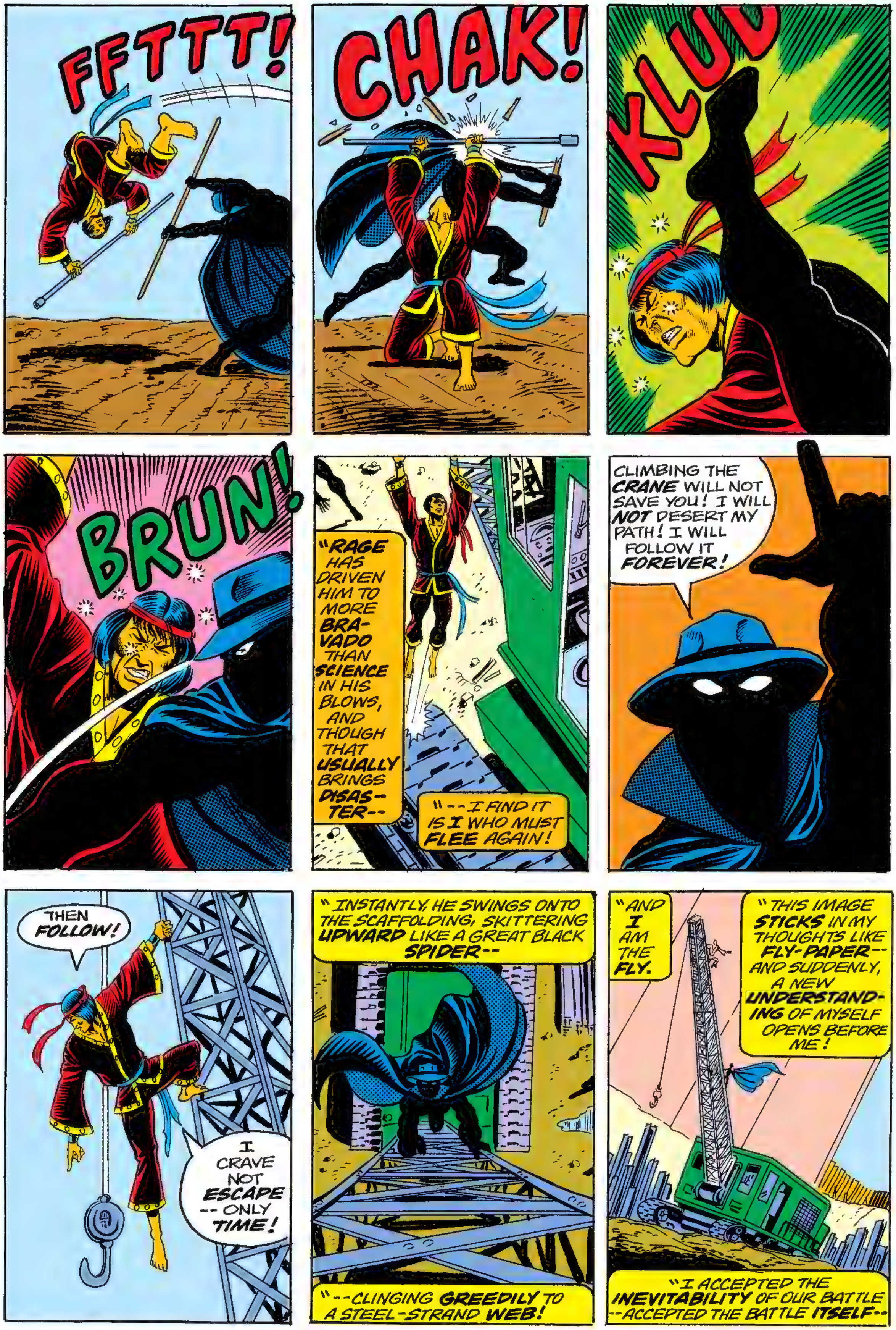

"HE KNOWS I COME PREPARED. MY NUNCHAKU WHIZZ FREE EVEN AS THE ALLEY WALLS RETURN THE SOUND OF HIS VOICE.
"HE STRIKES WELL. I RECOIL WELL. HE MISSES.
"I STEP AROUND THE BLADE AS HE RECOVERS HIMSELF, SMASHING HIM FOUR TIMES RUNNING WITH THE ON-SWEEPING MOTION OF MY ARM.
"IT PAINS HIM.
"HIS NEXT THRUST IS A TOUCH TOO SLOW--
"--AND I CATCH THE KNIFE.
"A TWIST TO PULL IT FROM HIS HAND, AND NOW--
WEAPONS WERE A MERCY OF A SORT, SHANG-CHI. IN UNARMED COMBAT, I SHALL BE YOUR SUPERIOR--
--FOR YOUR PATH IS NEW TO YOU, AND MINE IS AS OLD AS MY MEMORIES!

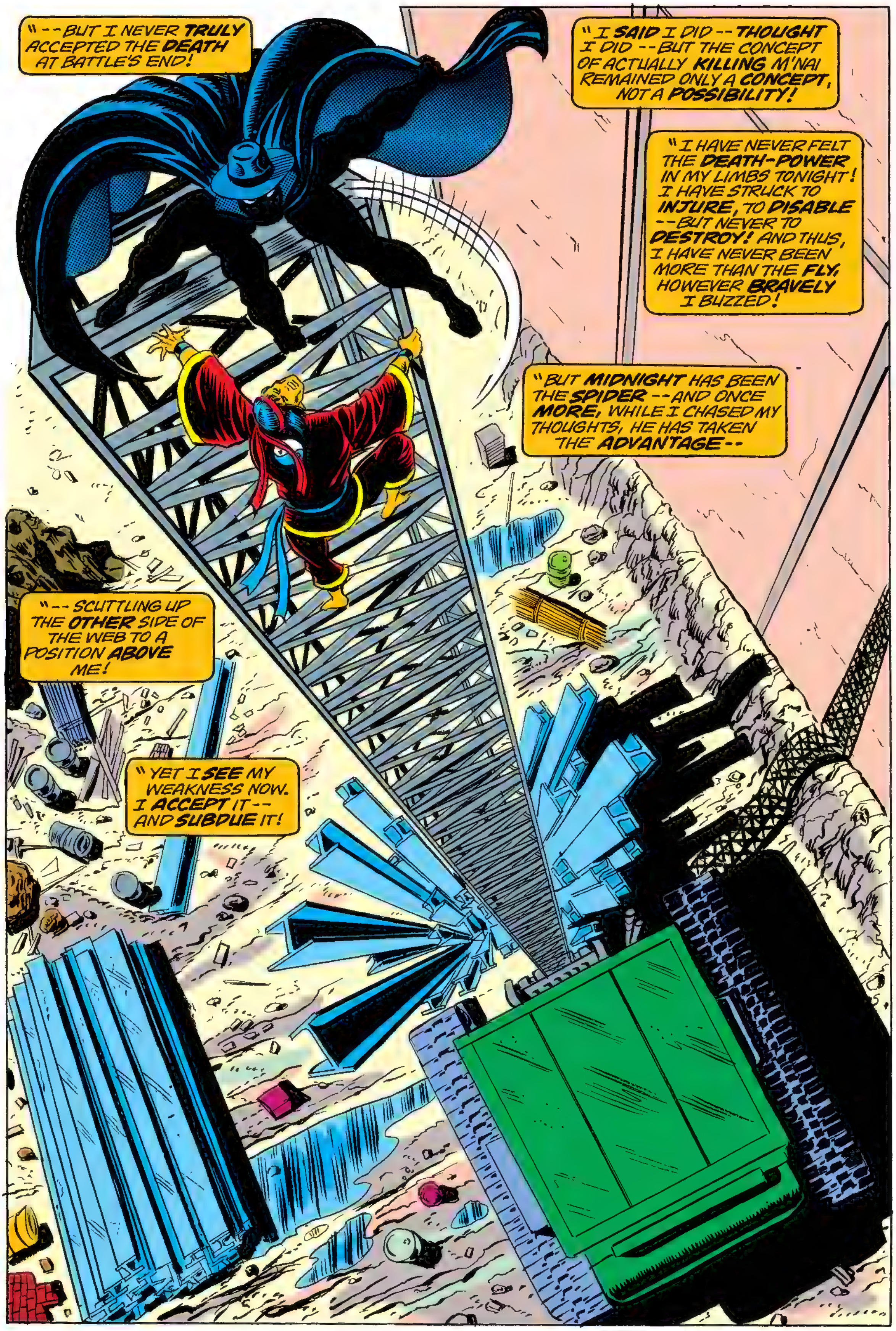

"HIS WORDS GLOW WITH CONFIDENCE -- YET THIS IS THE SECOND TIME HE HAS MENTIONED OUR DIVERGING PATHS!
"THE IDEA IS LODGED IN HIS BRAIN LIKE A BONE IN A MAN'S THROAT. THE FUNCTIONS OF THE THROAT CONTINUE AS BEFORE, BUT THERE IS ALWAYS PAIN.
"PERHAPS WORDS WILL HELP.
M'NAI, MY PATH IS NEW TO ME BECAUSE I ONLY RECENTLY REALIZED ITS EXISTENCE.
FU MANCHU ENLIGHTENED US ONLY TO THE PATH HE WISHED US TO FOLLOW, BUT IN THE OUTSIDE WORLD--
IN THE OUTSIDE WORLD, MY BROTHER, MEN HATE FU MANCHU AND HIS GLORIOUS WORK, JUST AS THEY HATE UGLINESS, DISFIGUREMENT, AND MEN FROM FOREIGN LANDS!
I SHALL NEVER WALK A PATH THROUGH SUCH FILTH!
"HIS KICK IS BRUTAL. I REACH FOR PROTECTION--
CRUMP!
THE PATH OF IGNORANCE AND BIGOTRY IS MUDDY BECAUSE IT IS WELL-TROD, I AGREE.
THE PATH OF A WISE MAN IS REMOVED FROM THAT, AND THUS IS CLEAN!
LIES!
KRAK!
AWRIGHT, CHORUS GIRLS--CUT OUT THE HIGH KICKS AN' STICK YER HANDS UP, NICE 'N EASY!
"A SPOTLIGHT! THAT VOICE---

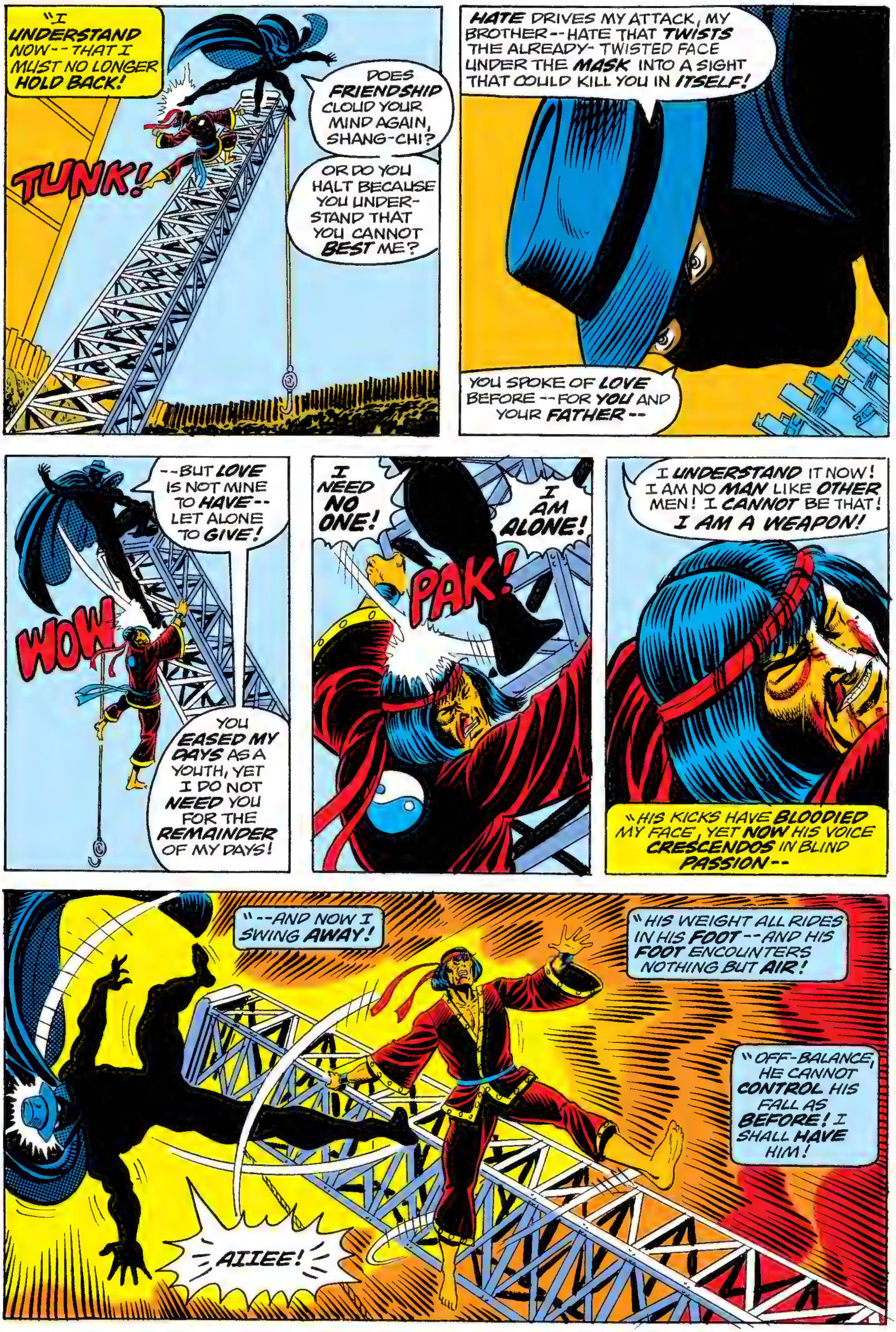

NEW YORK'S FINEST DON'T GO FOR BEATIN' UP COPS, PALLY, AN' WE'RE NOT AS INEPT AS YOU THINK!
TRACKIN' YOU DOWN WAS NO HARDER THAN CHECKIN' YER DESCRIPTION, MR. SHANG-CHI, MURDERER!
NOW REACH--
I SHALL FIND YOU LATER, MY BROTHER.
HEY!
WELL, I'LL BE--! THE KID'S GOT GUTS, AT ANY RATE!
BUT, BOY, AM I GONNA GET THE HORSELAUGH BACK AT THE STATION!
OKAY, BOSTON BLACKIE--AT LEAST I COLLARED YOU, SO LET'S--
HOLY CROW!
HE'S GONE, TOO!
"THE SKY IS STREAKED WITH THE PROMISE OF DAWN NOW. I STAND HIGH AND SILENT, SEARCHING.
"AS THE FALCON SEEKS HIS PREY BELOW HIM, I USE MY VANTAGE POINT TO SCAN THE STREETS BENEATH. ALSO, I USE IT FOR PROTECTION, FOR M'NAI'S SKILL IN BLENDING WITH SHADOWS HAS MADE HIM COMPLETELY SILENT, EVEN TO MY EARS.
WOK!
I AM THE ONLY MAN WHO CAN APPROACH YOU UNHEARD, SHANG-CHI--A FACT THAT DETERMINES MY VICTORY--
--AND YOUR DEATH!
DEAL ONLY WITH THE PRESENT, M'NAI! THE FUTURE LIES ALWAYS BEYOND ONE'S GRASP!

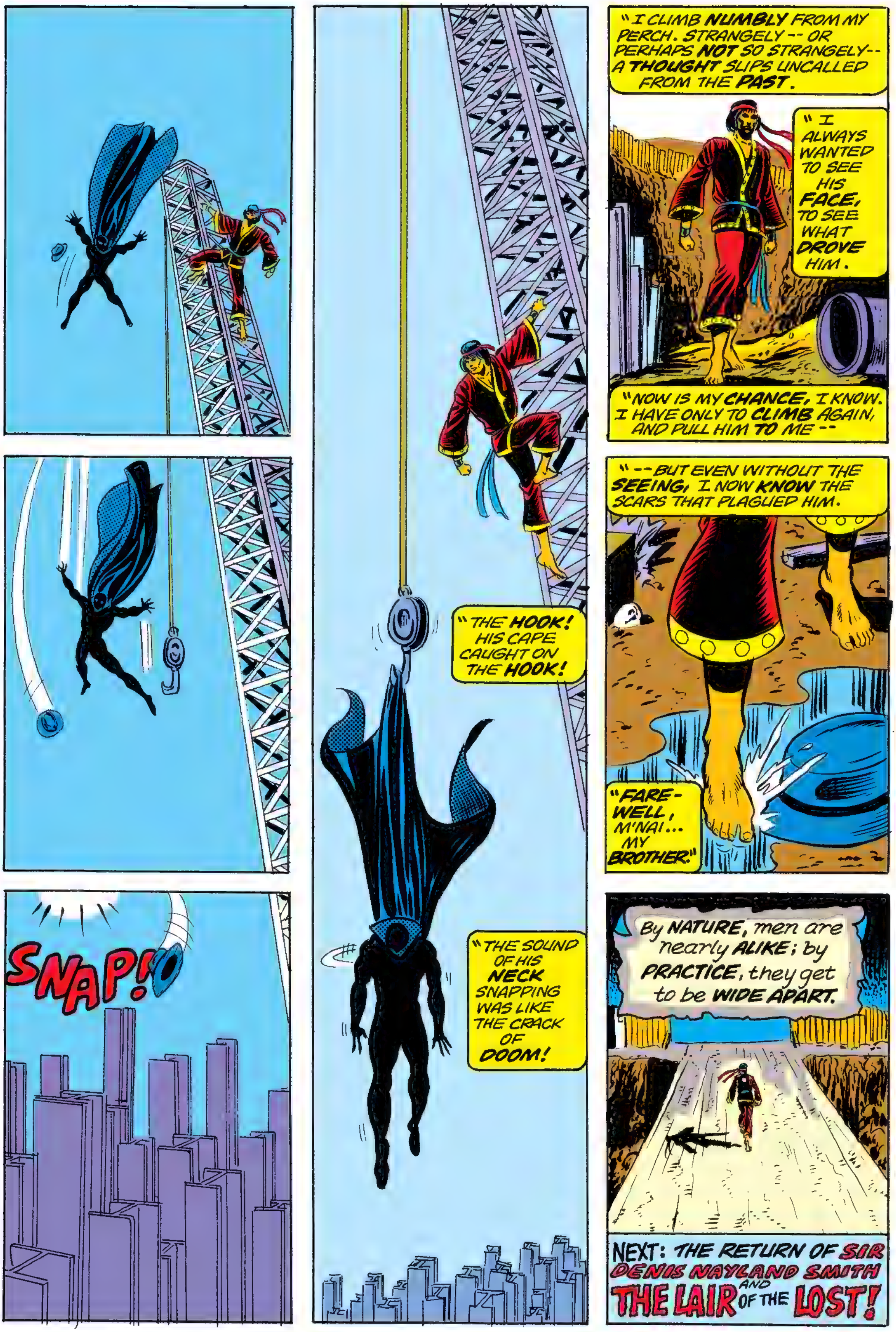

"I HANG BY MY FINGERTIPS, BUT THEY ARE STRONG AS STEEL -- STRONG ENOUGH TO ANCHOR ME AS I TWIST MY BODY TO THE OFFENSE.
WUMP!
"TECHNIQUES FOR UNARMED COMBAT AGAINST AN OPPONENT WITH A BO* FLASH THROUGH MY BRAIN, MY HANDS AND FEET--
"-- YET NONE ARE SO DESIRABLE AS AVOIDANCE OF SUCH COMBAT.
*STAFF. --R.T.
"HOWEVER, AS I CARRY MYSELF HAND-OVER-HAND ACROSS THE FIFTY-FOOT ABYSS, M'NAI LEAPS OUT TO WALK THE WIRE ON HIS TOES, USING THE STAFF FOR BALANCE!
"I HAVE MADE ANOTHER ERROR.
"ONLY MY SPEED AND A LAST-SECOND DROP TO A LEDGE BELOW--
"--ALLOW ME TO ESCAPE THE BLACK-CLAD FEET THAT SEEK TO CRUSH MY FINGERS AND CAUSE ME TO FALL.
"AND NOW EVEN THIS HAVEN IS DENIED ME!
"KNIFE-EDGED STARS SLICE PAST! M'NAI WILL NOT MISS FOR LONG!
"I DROP THREE STORIES TO THE STREET.
THUDD!

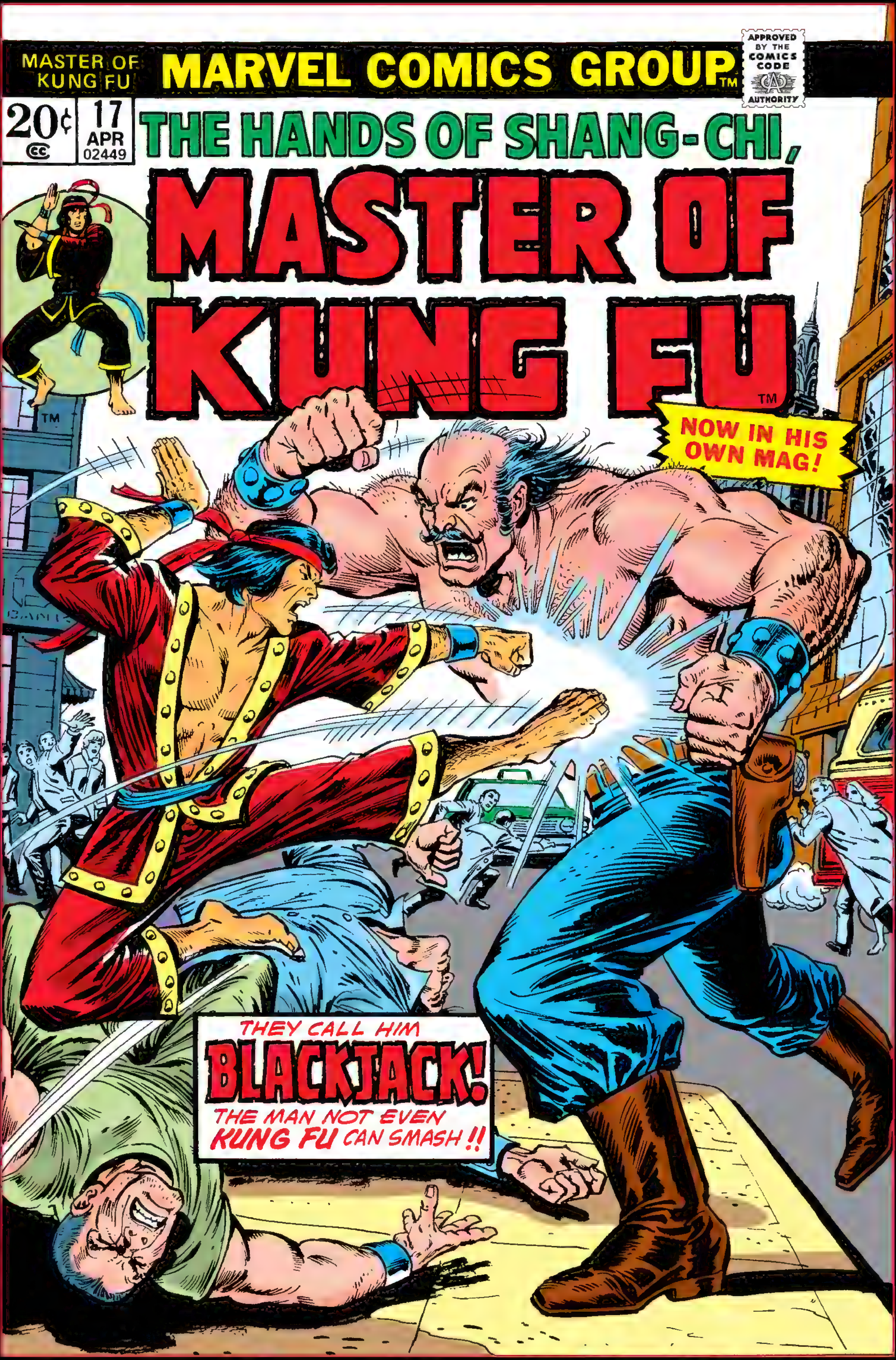

"AN ANSWERING THUD ANNOUNCES MIDNIGHT'S ARRIVAL.
SURRENDER, SHANG-CHI! DO NOT PROLONG THIS FURTHER!
"A CONSTRUCTION SITE! THERE MUST BE--
"--PIPES!
NOW, MIDNIGHT--NOW WE SHALL FACE EACH OTHER EVENLY MATCHED!
YOU--NO LONGER CALL ME BY MY GIVEN NAME! YOU CALL ME BY MY NOM DE GUERRE, MY BROTHER!
GIVEN NAMES ARE FOR FRIENDS, MIDNIGHT.
YOU HAVE FORFEITED OUR FRIENDSHIP!
A PATH CAN CONNECT TWO OPPOSITE POINTS, BUT A MAN CANNOT TRAVEL TOWARD BOTH AT THE SAME TIME!
IF YOUR LOVE FOR MY FATHER OUTWEIGHS YOUR LOVE FOR ME, I CAN ONLY RECOGNIZE IT, AND ACT ACCORDINGLY!
TONG!


FFTTT!
CHAK!
KLUD
BRUN!
"RAGE HAS DRIVEN HIM TO MORE BRAVADO THAN SCIENCE IN HIS BLOWS, AND THOUGH THAT USUALLY BRINGS DISASTER--
"--I FIND IT IS I WHO MUST FLEE AGAIN!
CLIMBING THE CRANE WILL NOT SAVE YOU! I WILL NOT DESERT MY PATH! I WILL FOLLOW IT FOREVER!
THEN FOLLOW!
I CRAVE NOT ESCAPE -- ONLY TIME!
"INSTANTLY, HE SWINGS ONTO THE SCAFFOLDING, SKITTERING UPWARD LIKE A GREAT BLACK SPIDER--
"--CLINGING GREEDILY TO A STEEL-STRAND WEB!
"AND I AM THE FLY.
"THIS IMAGE STICKS IN MY THOUGHTS LIKE FLY-PAPER--AND SUDDENLY, A NEW UNDERSTANDING OF MYSELF OPENS BEFORE ME!
"I ACCEPTED THE INEVITABILITY OF OUR BATTLE--ACCEPTED THE BATTLE ITSELF--


"--BUT I NEVER TRULY ACCEPTED THE DEATH AT BATTLE'S END!
"I SAID I DID--THOUGHT I DID--BUT THE CONCEPT OF ACTUALLY KILLING M'NAI REMAINED ONLY A CONCEPT, NOT A POSSIBILITY!
"I HAVE NEVER FELT THE DEATH-POWER IN MY LIMBS TONIGHT! I HAVE STRUCK TO INJURE, TO DISABLE--BUT NEVER TO DESTROY! AND THUS, I HAVE NEVER BEEN MORE THAN THE FLY, HOWEVER BRAVELY I BUZZED!
"BUT MIDNIGHT HAS BEEN THE SPIDER--AND ONCE MORE, WHILE I CHASED MY THOUGHTS, HE HAS TAKEN THE ADVANTAGE--
"--SCUTTLING UP THE OTHER SIDE OF THE WEB TO A POSITION ABOVE ME!
"YET I SEE MY WEAKNESS NOW. I ACCEPT IT--AND SUBDUE IT!


"I UNDERSTAND NOW -- THAT I MUST NO LONGER HOLD BACK!
TUNK!
DOES FRIENDSHIP CLOUD YOUR MIND AGAIN, SHANG-CHI?
OR DO YOU HALT BECAUSE YOU UNDERSTAND THAT YOU CANNOT BEST ME?
HATE DRIVES MY ATTACK, MY BROTHER -- HATE THAT TWISTS THE ALREADY-TWISTED FACE UNDER THE MASK INTO A SIGHT THAT COULD KILL YOU IN ITSELF!
YOU SPOKE OF LOVE BEFORE -- FOR YOU AND YOUR FATHER --
-- BUT LOVE IS NOT MINE TO HAVE -- LET ALONE TO GIVE!
WOW
YOU EASED MY DAYS AS A YOUTH, YET I DO NOT NEED YOU FOR THE REMAINDER OF MY DAYS!
I NEED NO ONE!
I AM ALONE!
PAK!
I UNDERSTAND IT NOW! I AM NO MAN LIKE OTHER MEN! I CANNOT BE THAT! I AM A WEAPON!
"HIS KICKS HAVE BLOODIED MY FACE, YET NOW HIS VOICE CRESCENDOS IN BLIND PASSION --
" -- AND NOW I SWING AWAY!
"HIS WEIGHT ALL RIDES IN HIS FOOT -- AND HIS FOOT ENCOUNTERS NOTHING BUT AIR!
"OFF-BALANCE, HE CANNOT CONTROL HIS FALL AS BEFORE! I SHALL HAVE HIM!
AIIEE!


SNAP!
"THE HOOK! HIS CAPE CAUGHT ON THE HOOK!
"THE SOUND OF HIS NECK SNAPPING WAS LIKE THE CRACK OF DOOM!
"I CLIMB NUMBLY FROM MY PERCH. STRANGELY -- OR PERHAPS NOT SO STRANGELY -- A THOUGHT SLIPS UNCALLED FROM THE PAST.
"I ALWAYS WANTED TO SEE HIS FACE, TO SEE WHAT DROVE HIM.
"NOW IS MY CHANCE, I KNOW. I HAVE ONLY TO CLIMB AGAIN, AND PULL HIM TO ME --
"-- BUT EVEN WITHOUT THE SEEING, I NOW KNOW THE SCARS THAT PLAGUED HIM.
"FAREWELL, M'NAI... MY BROTHER."
By NATURE, men are nearly ALIKE; by PRACTICE, they get to be WIDE APART.
NEXT: THE RETURN OF SIR DENIS NAYLAND SMITH AND THE LAIR OF THE LOST!


MASTER OF KUNG FU
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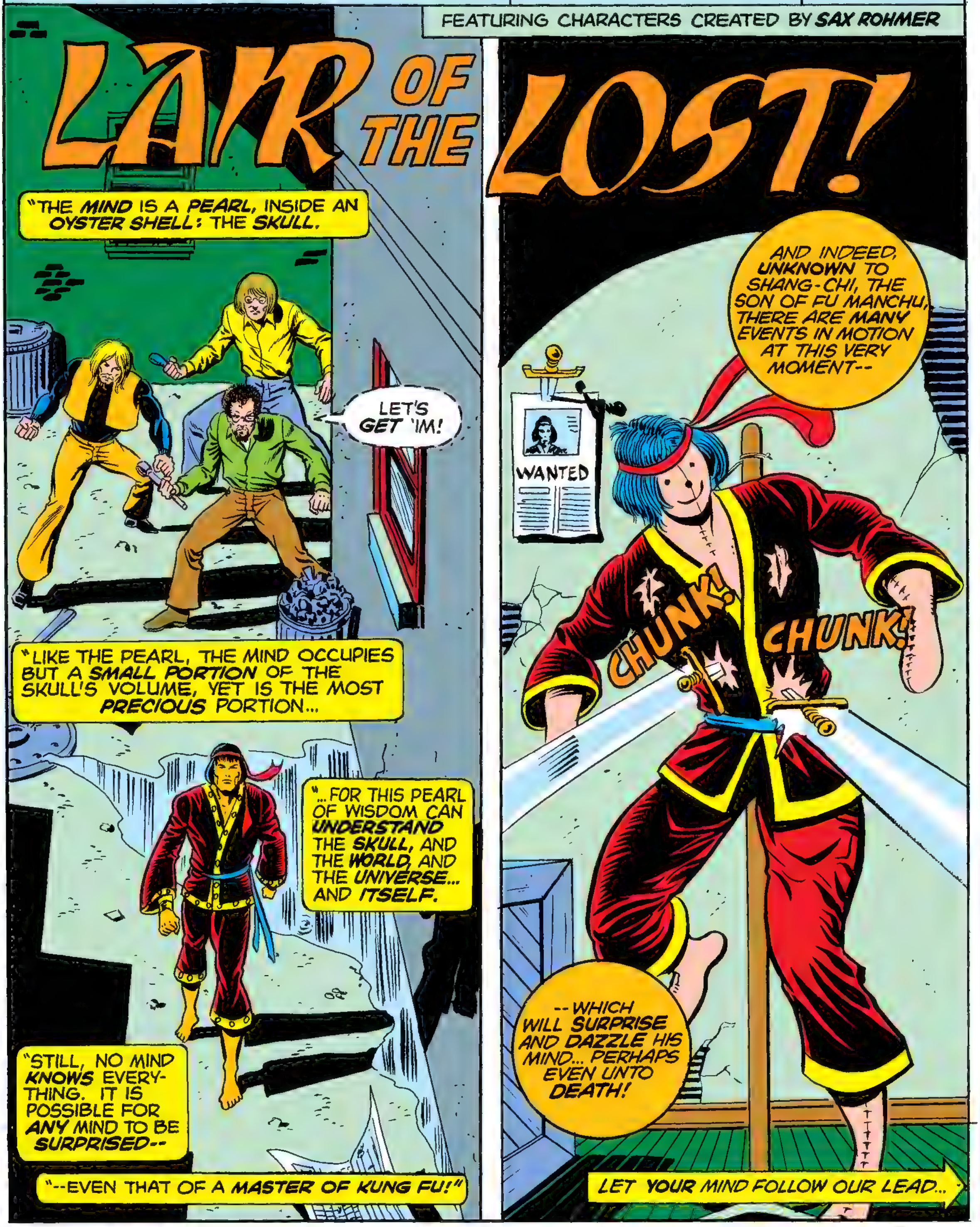
APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY
20¢ CC
17 APR 02449
THE HANDS OF SHANG-CHI,
MASTER OF KUNG FU™
TM
NOW IN HIS OWN MAG!
THEY CALL HIM BLACKJACK! THE MAN NOT EVEN KUNG FU CAN SMASH!!

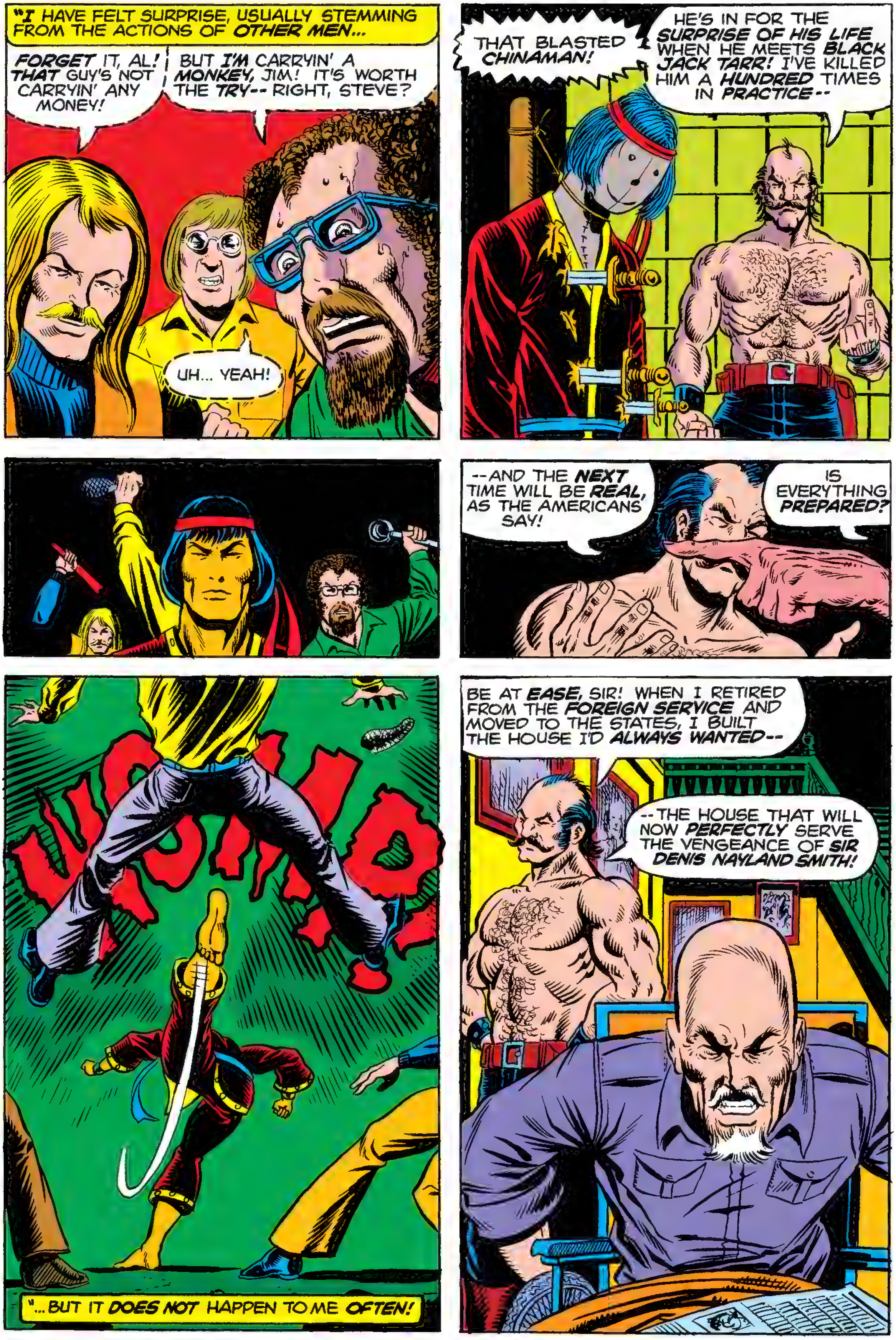
Stan Lee PRESENTS: **MASTER OF KUNG FU!** ™

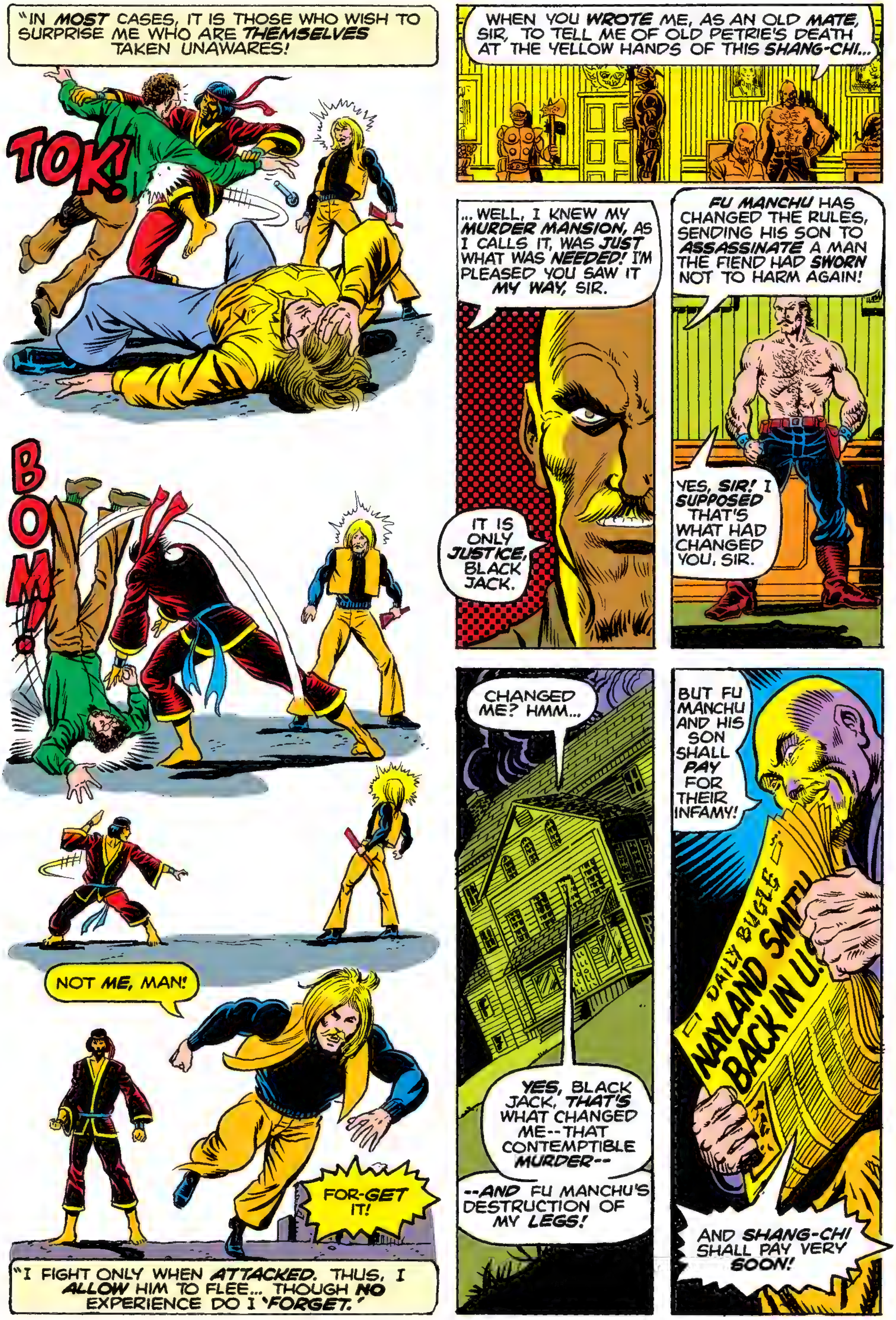
STEVE ENGLEHART BREATH • **JIM STARLIN** MOVEMENT • **AL MILGROM** FORM | TOM ORZECHOWSKI, *LETTERER* GEORGE ROUSSOS, *COLORIST* | **ROY THOMAS** EDITOR

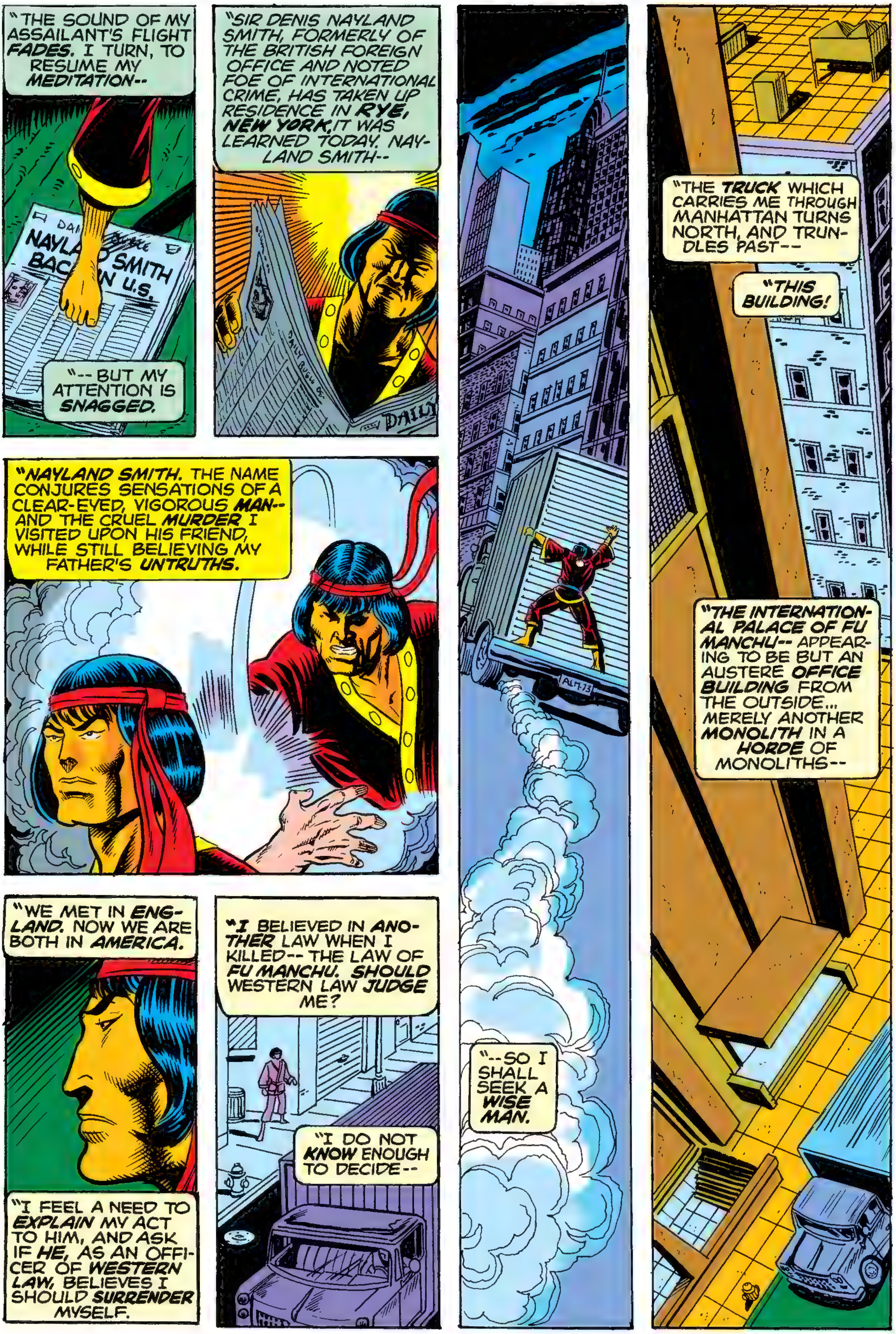
FEATURING CHARACTERS CREATED BY ***SAX ROHMER***

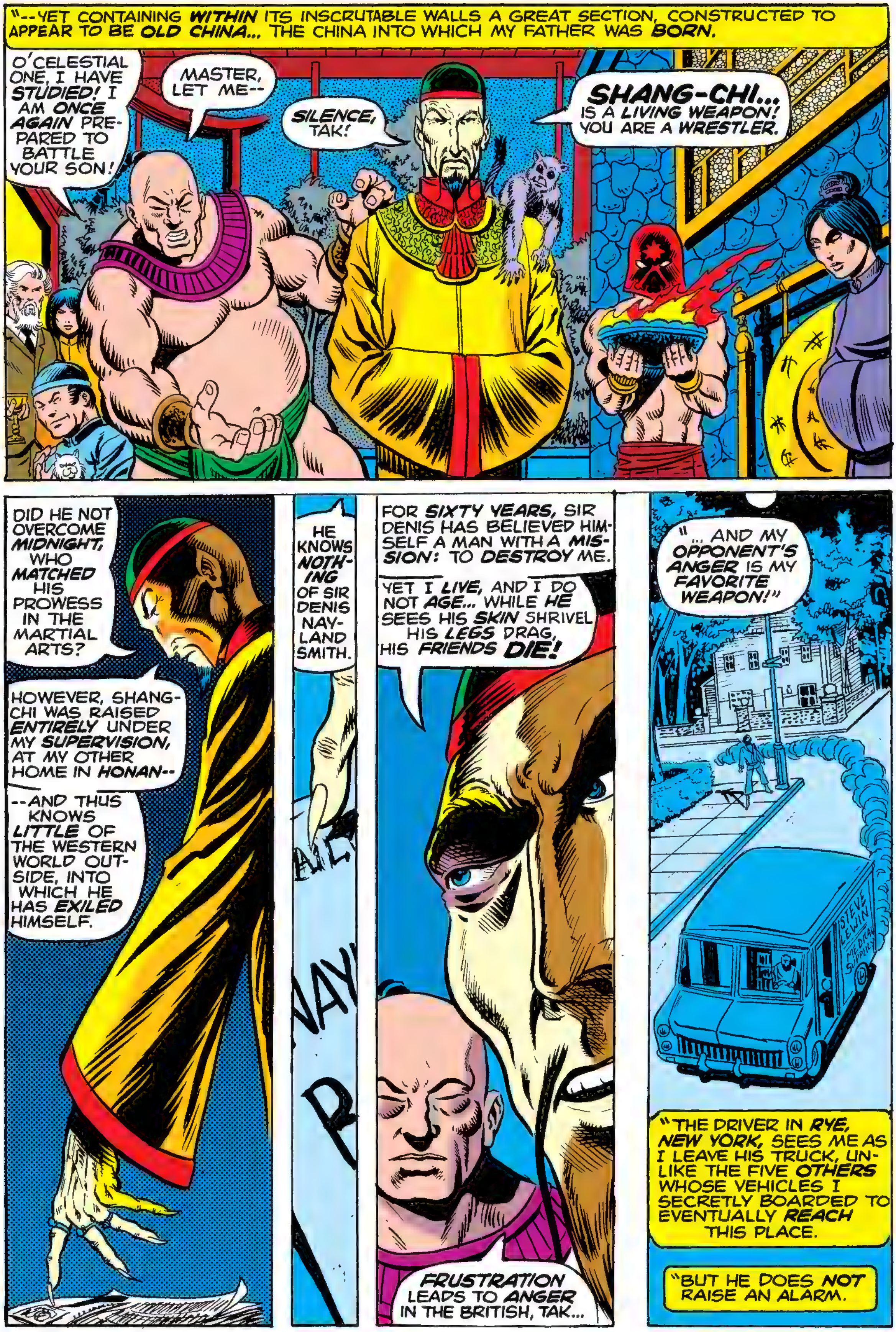
LAIR OF THE LOST!

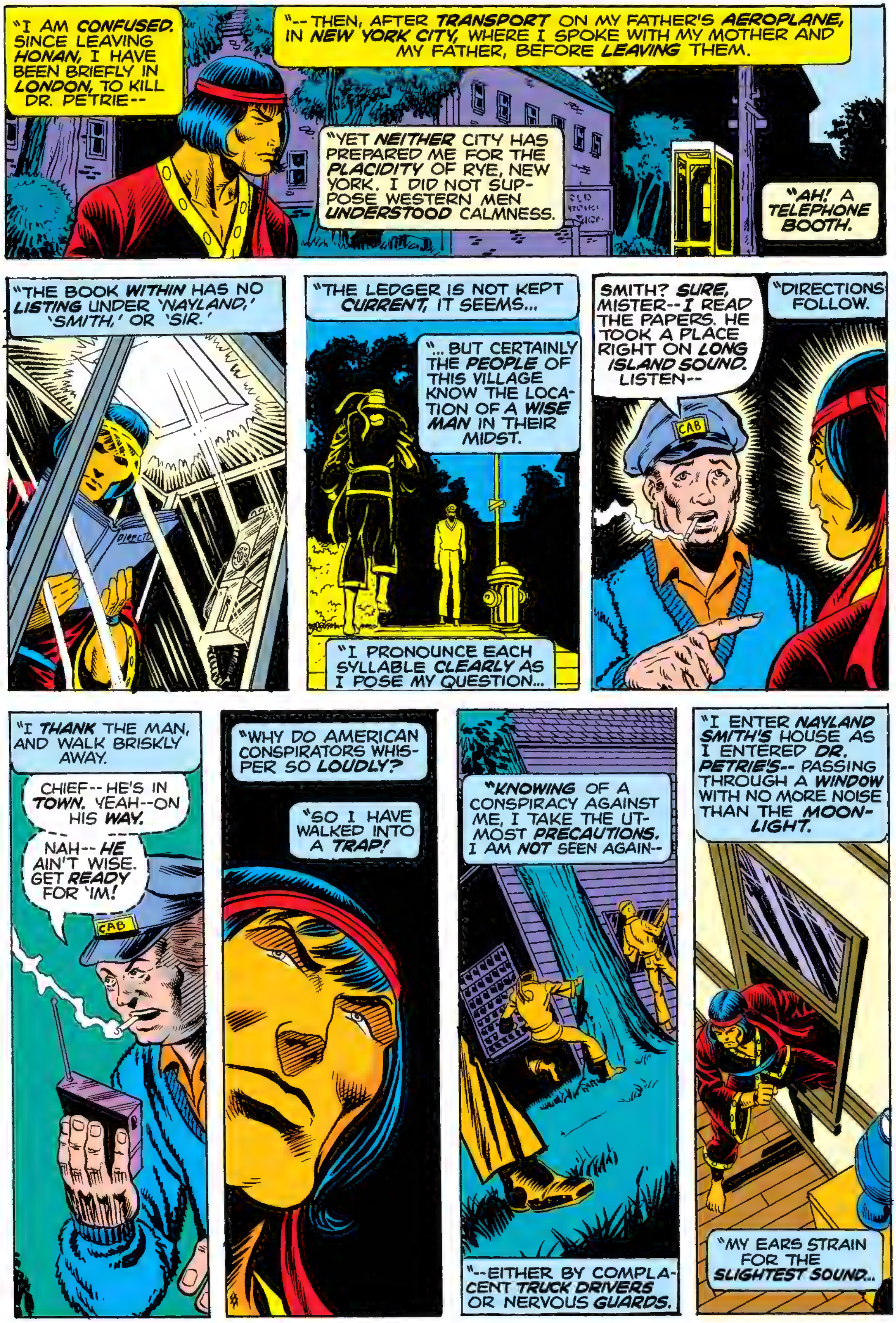

"THE *MIND* IS A *PEARL*, INSIDE AN *OYSTER SHELL*: THE *SKULL*.
LET'S *GET* 'IM!
"LIKE THE PEARL, THE MIND OCCUPIES BUT A *SMALL PORTION* OF THE SKULL'S VOLUME, YET IS THE MOST *PRECIOUS* PORTION...
"...FOR THIS PEARL OF WISDOM CAN *UNDERSTAND* THE *SKULL*, AND THE *WORLD*, AND THE *UNIVERSE*... AND *ITSELF*.
"STILL, NO MIND *KNOWS* EVERYTHING. IT IS POSSIBLE FOR *ANY* MIND TO BE *SURPRISED*--
"--EVEN THAT OF A *MASTER OF KUNG FU!*"
AND INDEED, *UNKNOWN* TO SHANG-CHI, THE SON OF FU MANCHU, THERE ARE *MANY* EVENTS IN MOTION AT THIS VERY MOMENT--
WANTED
CHUNK!
CHUNK!
--WHICH WILL *SURPRISE* AND *DAZZLE* HIS MIND... PERHAPS EVEN UNTO *DEATH!*
LET YOUR MIND FOLLOW OUR LEAD...

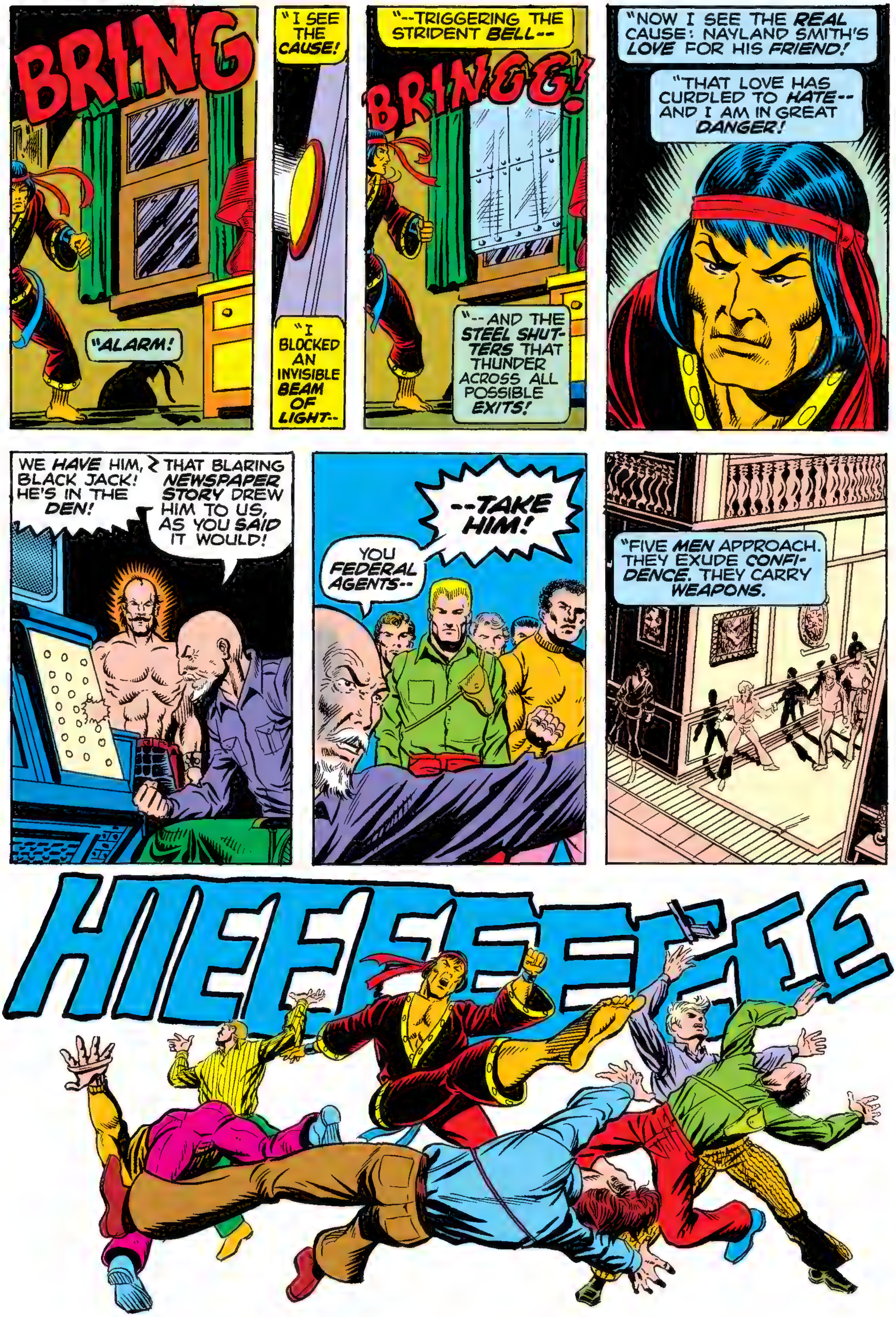

"I HAVE FELT SURPRISE, USUALLY STEMMING FROM THE ACTIONS OF OTHER MEN...
FORGET IT, AL! THAT GUY'S NOT CARRYIN' ANY MONEY!
BUT I'M CARRYIN' A MONKEY, JIM! IT'S WORTH THE TRY-- RIGHT, STEVE?
UH... YEAH!
THAT BLASTED CHINAMAN!
HE'S IN FOR THE SURPRISE OF HIS LIFE WHEN HE MEETS BLACK JACK TARR! I'VE KILLED HIM A HUNDRED TIMES IN PRACTICE--
--AND THE NEXT TIME WILL BE REAL, AS THE AMERICANS SAY!
IS EVERYTHING PREPARED?
WHOMP
"...BUT IT DOES NOT HAPPEN TO ME OFTEN!
BE AT EASE, SIR! WHEN I RETIRED FROM THE FOREIGN SERVICE AND MOVED TO THE STATES, I BUILT THE HOUSE I'D ALWAYS WANTED--
--THE HOUSE THAT WILL NOW PERFECTLY SERVE THE VENGEANCE OF SIR DENIS NAYLAND SMITH!

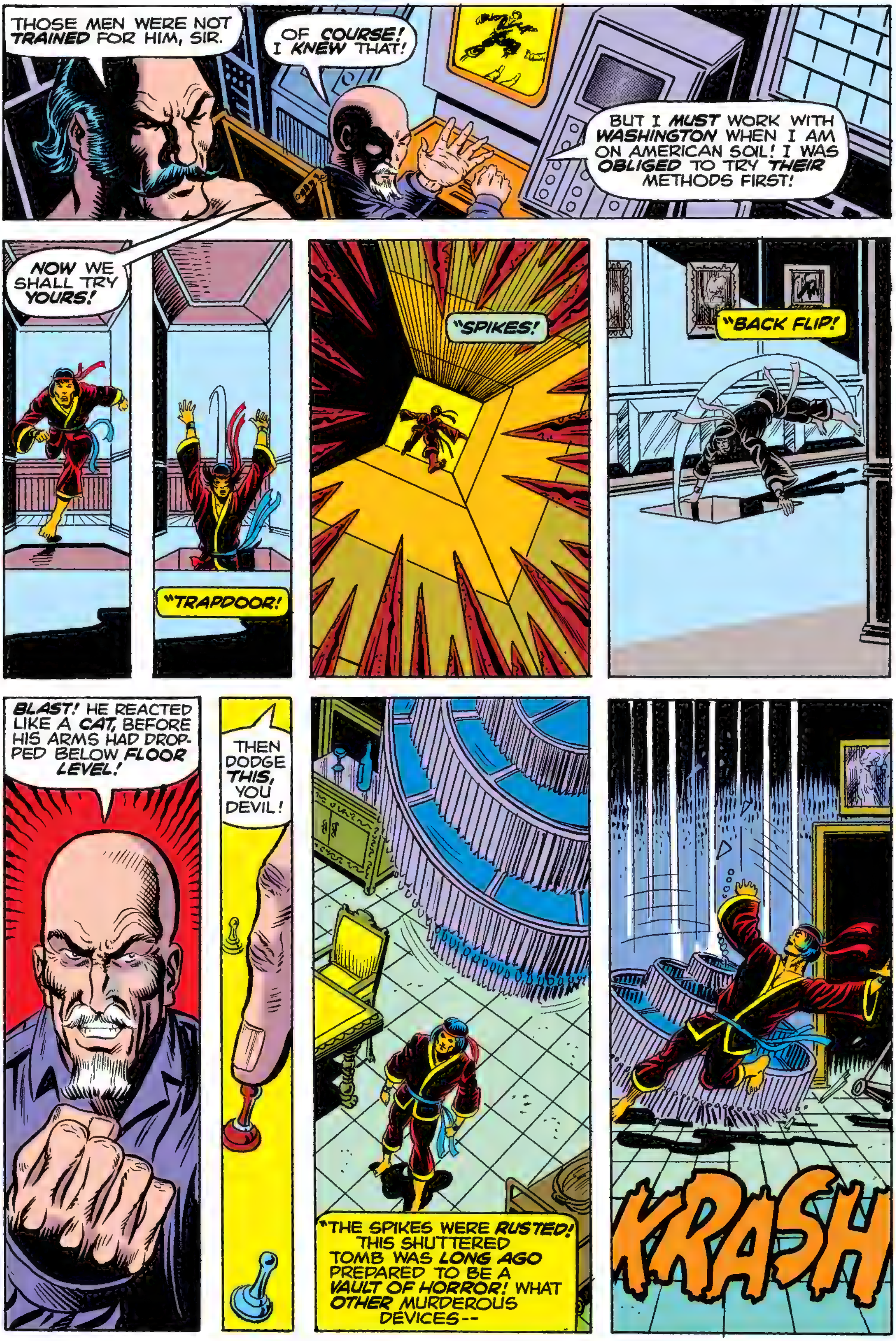

"IN *MOST* CASES, IT IS THOSE WHO WISH TO SURPRISE ME WHO ARE *THEMSELVES* TAKEN UNAWARES!
TOK!
BOM!
NOT *ME*, MAN!
FOR-GET IT!
"I FIGHT ONLY WHEN *ATTACKED*. THUS, I *ALLOW* HIM TO FLEE... THOUGH *NO* EXPERIENCE DO I '*FORGET*.'
WHEN YOU *WROTE* ME, AS AN OLD *MATE*, SIR, TO TELL ME OF OLD PETRIE'S DEATH AT THE YELLOW HANDS OF THIS *SHANG-CHI*...
...WELL, I KNEW MY *MURDER MANSION*, AS I CALLS IT, WAS *JUST* WHAT WAS *NEEDED!* I'M PLEASED YOU SAW IT *MY WAY*, SIR.
IT IS ONLY *JUSTICE*, BLACK JACK.
FU MANCHU HAS CHANGED THE RULES, SENDING HIS SON TO *ASSASSINATE* A MAN THE FIEND HAD *SWORN* NOT TO HARM AGAIN!
YES, *SIR!* I *SUPPOSED* THAT'S WHAT HAD CHANGED YOU, SIR.
CHANGED ME? HMM...
YES, BLACK JACK, *THAT'S* WHAT CHANGED ME--THAT CONTEMPTIBLE *MURDER*--
--*AND* FU MANCHU'S DESTRUCTION OF MY *LEGS!*
BUT FU MANCHU AND HIS SON SHALL *PAY* FOR THEIR INFAMY!
DAILY BUGLE
NAYLAND SMITH BACK IN U.S.
AND *SHANG-CHI* SHALL PAY VERY *SOON!*

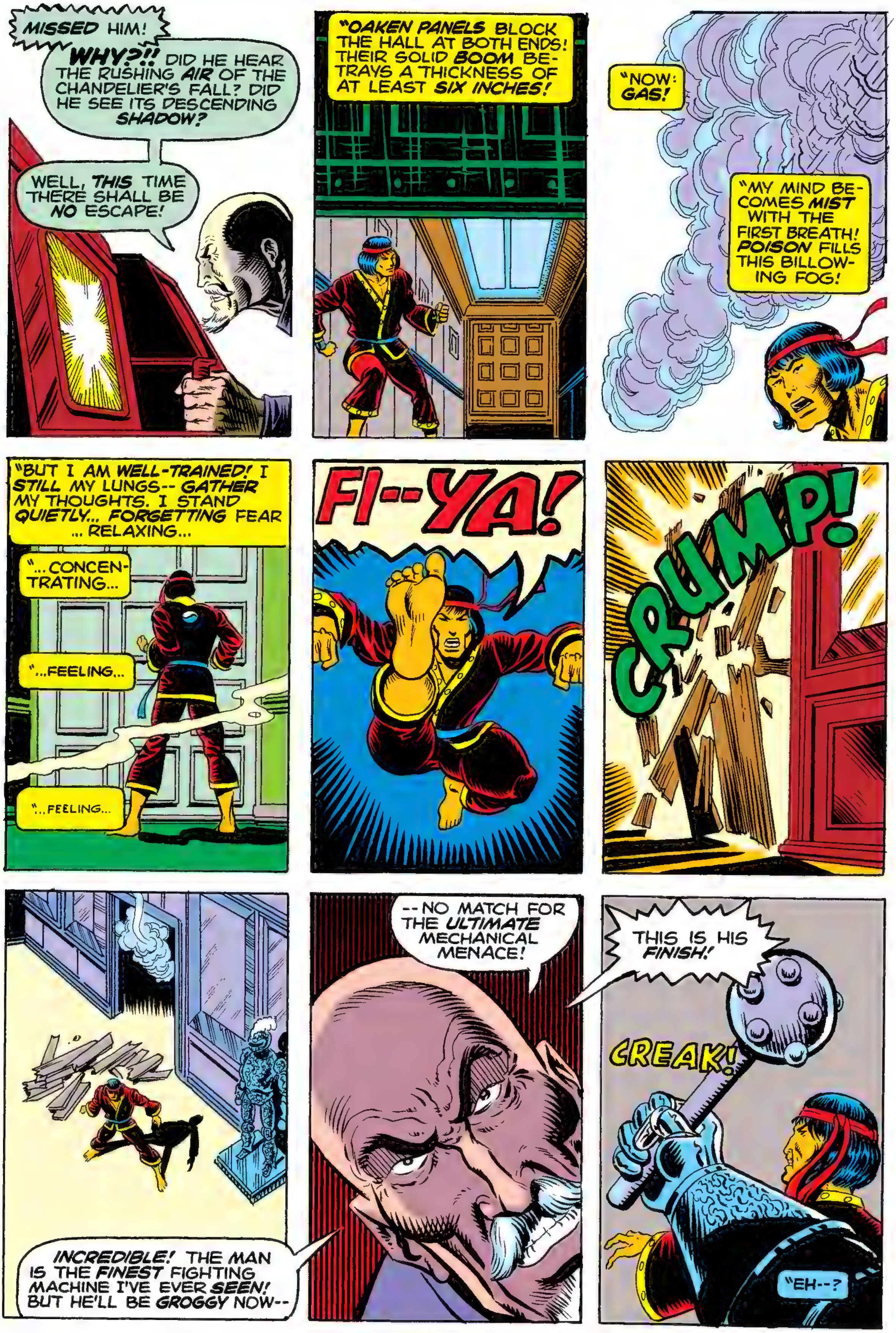

"THE SOUND OF MY ASSAILANT'S FLIGHT *FADES*. I TURN, TO RESUME MY *MEDITATION*--
DAILY BUGLE
NAYLAND SMITH BACK IN U.S.
"--BUT MY ATTENTION IS *SNAGGED*.
"SIR DENIS NAYLAND SMITH, FORMERLY OF THE BRITISH FOREIGN OFFICE AND NOTED FOE OF INTERNATIONAL CRIME, HAS TAKEN UP RESIDENCE IN *RYE, NEW YORK*, IT WAS LEARNED TODAY. NAYLAND SMITH--
DAILY BUGLE
DAILY
"*NAYLAND SMITH*. THE NAME CONJURES SENSATIONS OF A CLEAR-EYED, VIGOROUS *MAN*-- AND THE CRUEL *MURDER* I VISITED UPON HIS FRIEND, WHILE STILL BELIEVING MY FATHER'S *UNTRUTHS*.
"WE MET IN *ENGLAND*. NOW WE ARE BOTH IN *AMERICA*.
"I FEEL A NEED TO *EXPLAIN* MY ACT TO HIM, AND ASK IF *HE*, AS AN OFFICER OF *WESTERN LAW*, BELIEVES I SHOULD *SURRENDER* MYSELF.
"I BELIEVED IN *ANOTHER* LAW WHEN I KILLED-- THE LAW OF *FU MANCHU*. *SHOULD* WESTERN LAW *JUDGE* ME?
"I DO NOT *KNOW* ENOUGH TO DECIDE--
ALM-73
"--SO I SHALL SEEK A *WISE MAN*.
"THE *TRUCK* WHICH CARRIES ME THROUGH MANHATTAN TURNS NORTH, AND TRUNDLES PAST--
"*THIS BUILDING!*
"*THE INTERNATIONAL PALACE OF FU MANCHU*-- APPEARING TO BE BUT AN AUSTERE *OFFICE BUILDING* FROM THE OUTSIDE... MERELY ANOTHER *MONOLITH* IN A *HORDE* OF MONOLITHS--

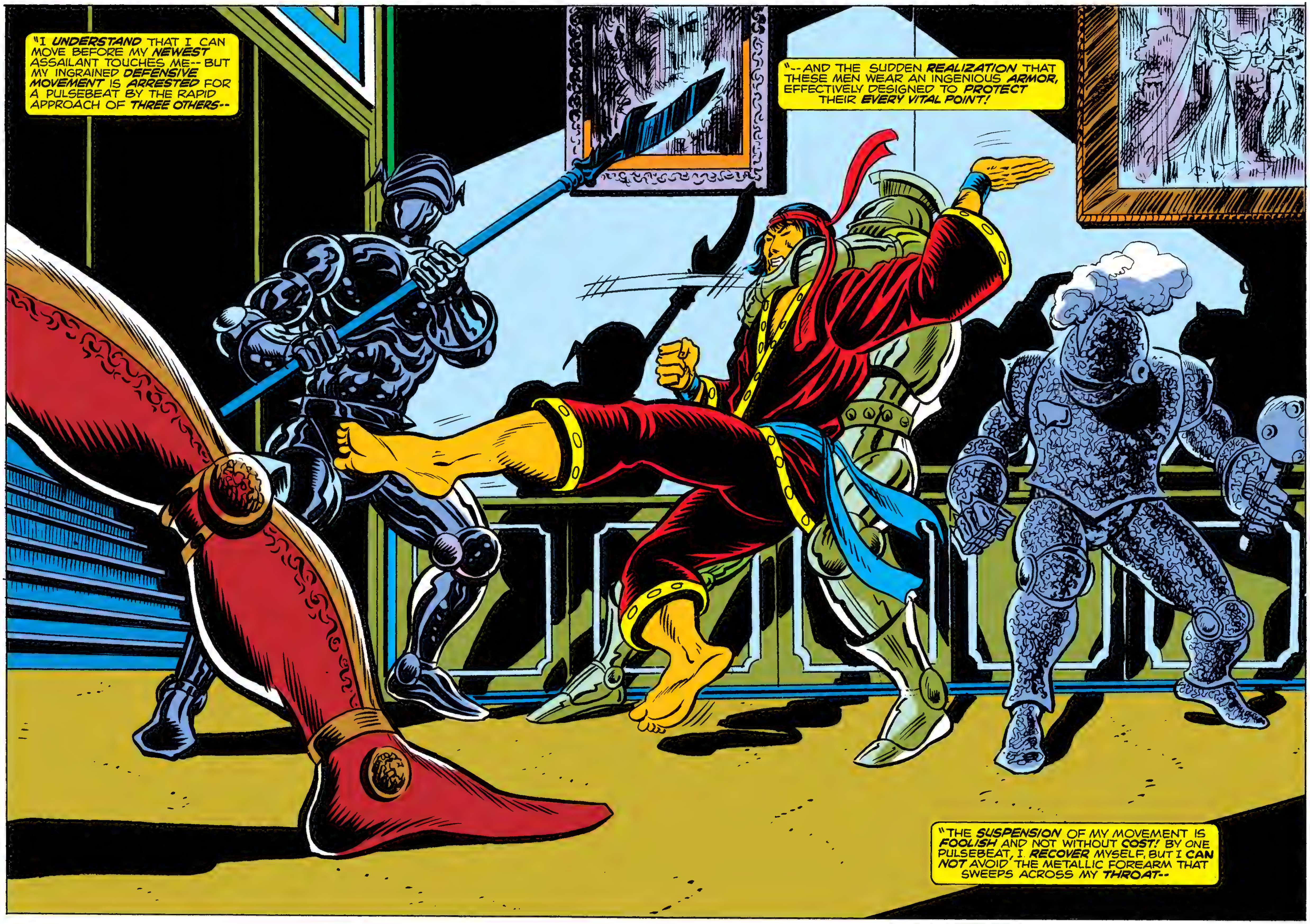

"--YET CONTAINING *WITHIN* ITS INSCRUTABLE WALLS A GREAT SECTION, CONSTRUCTED TO APPEAR TO BE *OLD CHINA*... THE CHINA INTO WHICH MY FATHER WAS *BORN*.
O'CELESTIAL ONE, I HAVE *STUDIED!* I AM *ONCE AGAIN* PREPARED TO BATTLE YOUR SON!
MASTER, LET ME--
SILENCE, TAK!
SHANG-CHI... IS A *LIVING WEAPON!* YOU ARE A *WRESTLER.*
DID HE NOT OVERCOME *MIDNIGHT,* WHO *MATCHED* HIS PROWESS IN THE MARTIAL ARTS?
HOWEVER, SHANG-CHI WAS RAISED *ENTIRELY* UNDER MY *SUPERVISION,* AT MY OTHER HOME IN *HONAN*--
--AND THUS KNOWS *LITTLE* OF THE WESTERN WORLD OUTSIDE, INTO WHICH HE HAS *EXILED* HIMSELF.
HE KNOWS *NOTHING* OF SIR DENIS NAYLAND SMITH.
FOR *SIXTY YEARS,* SIR DENIS HAS BELIEVED HIMSELF A MAN WITH A *MISSION:* TO *DESTROY* ME.
YET I *LIVE,* AND I DO NOT *AGE*... WHILE *HE* SEES HIS *SKIN* SHRIVEL, HIS *LEGS* DRAG, HIS *FRIENDS DIE!*
FRUSTRATION LEADS TO *ANGER* IN THE BRITISH, TAK...
"... AND MY *OPPONENT'S ANGER* IS MY *FAVORITE WEAPON!*"
STEVE LEWIN MEDICAL SUPPLIES
"THE DRIVER IN *RYE, NEW YORK,* SEES ME AS I LEAVE HIS TRUCK, UNLIKE THE FIVE *OTHERS* WHOSE VEHICLES I SECRETLY BOARDED TO EVENTUALLY *REACH* THIS PLACE.
"BUT HE DOES *NOT* RAISE AN ALARM.

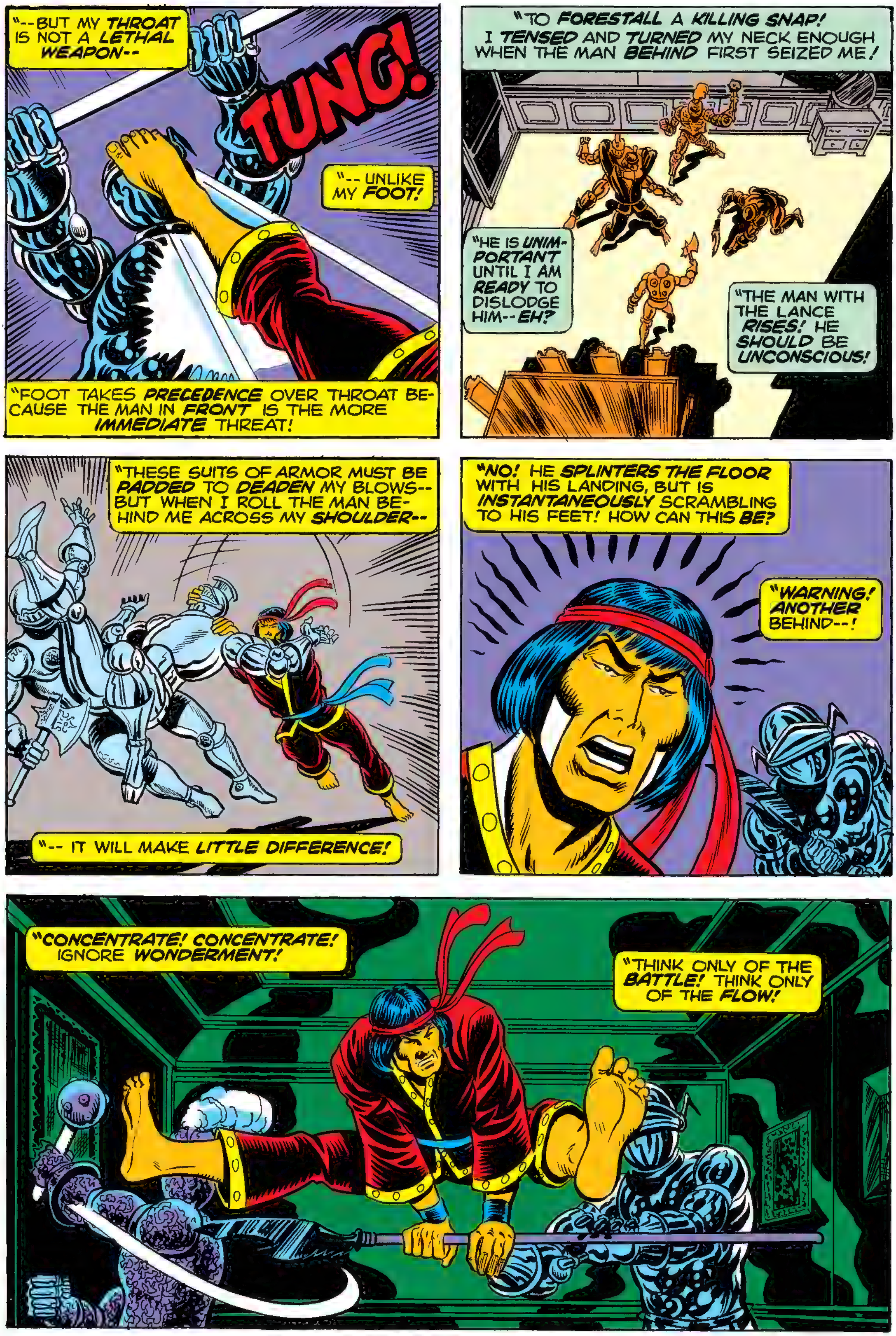

"I AM CONFUSED. SINCE LEAVING HONAN, I HAVE BEEN BRIEFLY IN LONDON, TO KILL DR. PETRIE--
"-- THEN, AFTER TRANSPORT ON MY FATHER'S AEROPLANE, IN NEW YORK CITY, WHERE I SPOKE WITH MY MOTHER AND MY FATHER, BEFORE LEAVING THEM.
"YET NEITHER CITY HAS PREPARED ME FOR THE PLACIDITY OF RYE, NEW YORK. I DID NOT SUPPOSE WESTERN MEN UNDERSTOOD CALMNESS.
"AH! A TELEPHONE BOOTH.
"THE BOOK WITHIN HAS NO LISTING UNDER 'NAYLAND,' 'SMITH,' OR 'SIR.'
DIRECTO
"THE LEDGER IS NOT KEPT CURRENT, IT SEEMS...
"... BUT CERTAINLY THE PEOPLE OF THIS VILLAGE KNOW THE LOCATION OF A WISE MAN IN THEIR MIDST.
"I PRONOUNCE EACH SYLLABLE CLEARLY AS I POSE MY QUESTION...
SMITH? SURE, MISTER--I READ THE PAPERS. HE TOOK A PLACE RIGHT ON LONG ISLAND SOUND. LISTEN--
"DIRECTIONS FOLLOW.
CAB
"I THANK THE MAN, AND WALK BRISKLY AWAY.
CHIEF-- HE'S IN TOWN. YEAH--ON HIS WAY.
NAH-- HE AIN'T WISE. GET READY FOR 'IM!
CAB
"WHY DO AMERICAN CONSPIRATORS WHISPER SO LOUDLY?
"SO I HAVE WALKED INTO A TRAP!
"KNOWING OF A CONSPIRACY AGAINST ME, I TAKE THE UTMOST PRECAUTIONS. I AM NOT SEEN AGAIN--
"--EITHER BY COMPLACENT TRUCK DRIVERS OR NERVOUS GUARDS.
"I ENTER NAYLAND SMITH'S HOUSE AS I ENTERED DR. PETRIE'S-- PASSING THROUGH A WINDOW WITH NO MORE NOISE THAN THE MOONLIGHT.
"MY EARS STRAIN FOR THE SLIGHTEST SOUND...

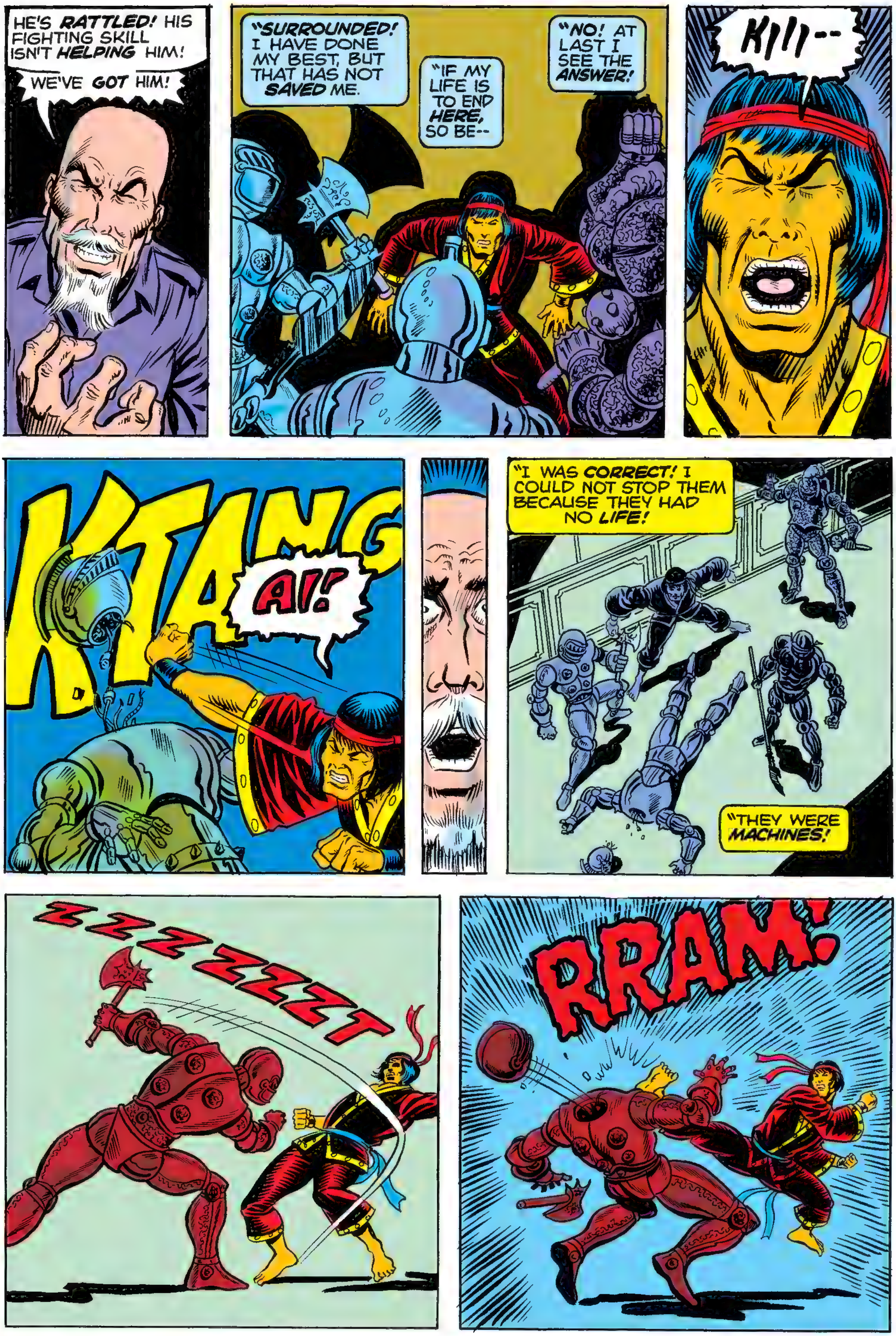

BRING
"ALARM!
"I SEE THE CAUSE!
"I BLOCKED AN INVISIBLE BEAM OF LIGHT--
"--TRIGGERING THE STRIDENT BELL--
BRINGG!
"--AND THE STEEL SHUTTERS THAT THUNDER ACROSS ALL POSSIBLE EXITS!
"NOW I SEE THE REAL CAUSE: NAYLAND SMITH'S LOVE FOR HIS FRIEND!
"THAT LOVE HAS CURDLED TO HATE-- AND I AM IN GREAT DANGER!
WE HAVE HIM, BLACK JACK! HE'S IN THE DEN!
THAT BLARING NEWSPAPER STORY DREW HIM TO US, AS YOU SAID IT WOULD!
YOU FEDERAL AGENTS--
--TAKE HIM!
"FIVE MEN APPROACH. THEY EXUDE CONFIDENCE. THEY CARRY WEAPONS.
HIEEEEEEE

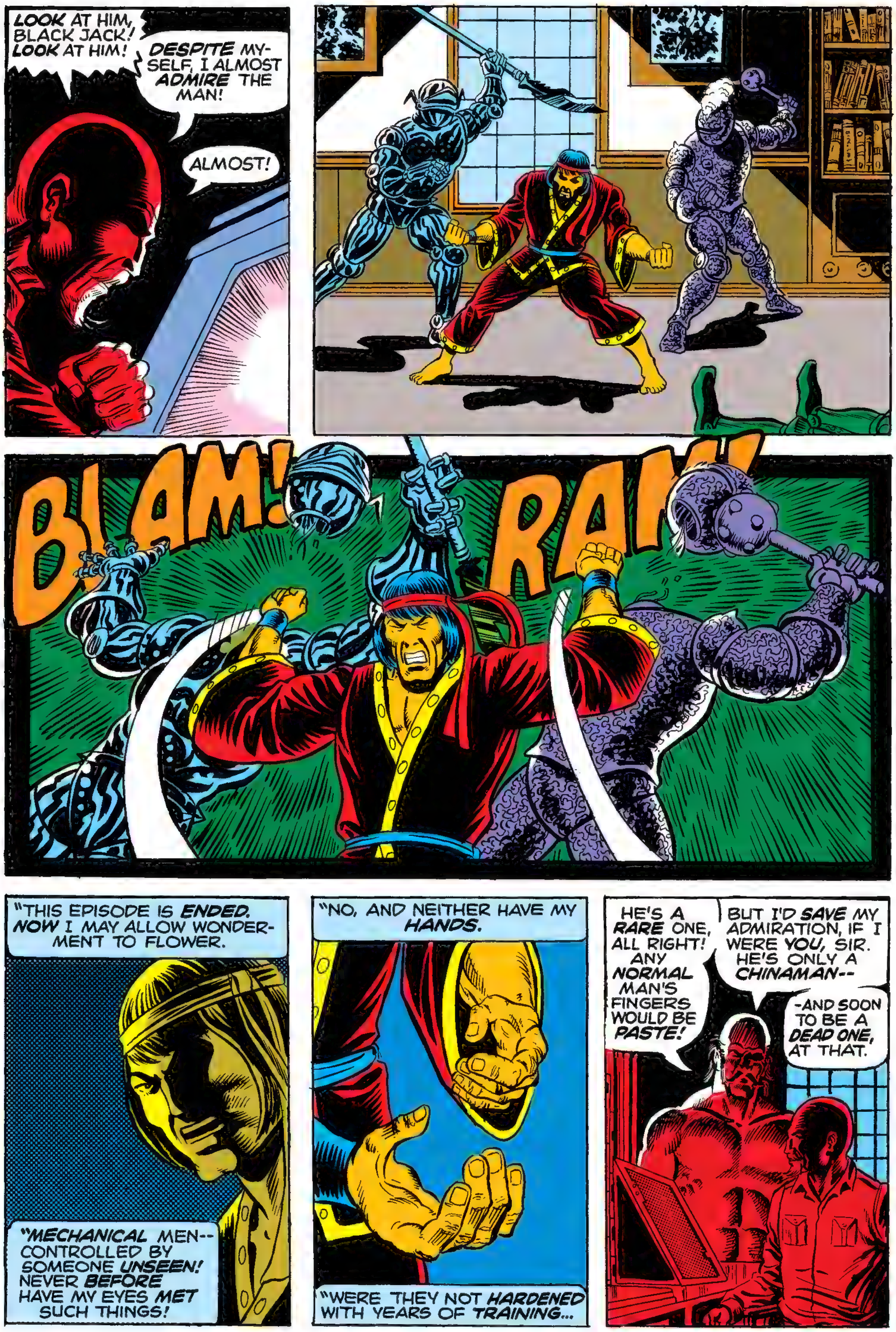

THOSE MEN WERE NOT TRAINED FOR HIM, SIR.
OF COURSE! I KNEW THAT!
BUT I MUST WORK WITH WASHINGTON WHEN I AM ON AMERICAN SOIL! I WAS OBLIGED TO TRY THEIR METHODS FIRST!
NOW WE SHALL TRY YOURS!
"TRAPDOOR!
"SPIKES!
"BACK FLIP!
BLAST! HE REACTED LIKE A CAT, BEFORE HIS ARMS HAD DROPPED BELOW FLOOR LEVEL!
THEN DODGE THIS, YOU DEVIL!
"THE SPIKES WERE RUSTED! THIS SHUTTERED TOMB WAS LONG AGO PREPARED TO BE A VAULT OF HORROR! WHAT OTHER MURDEROUS DEVICES--
KRASH

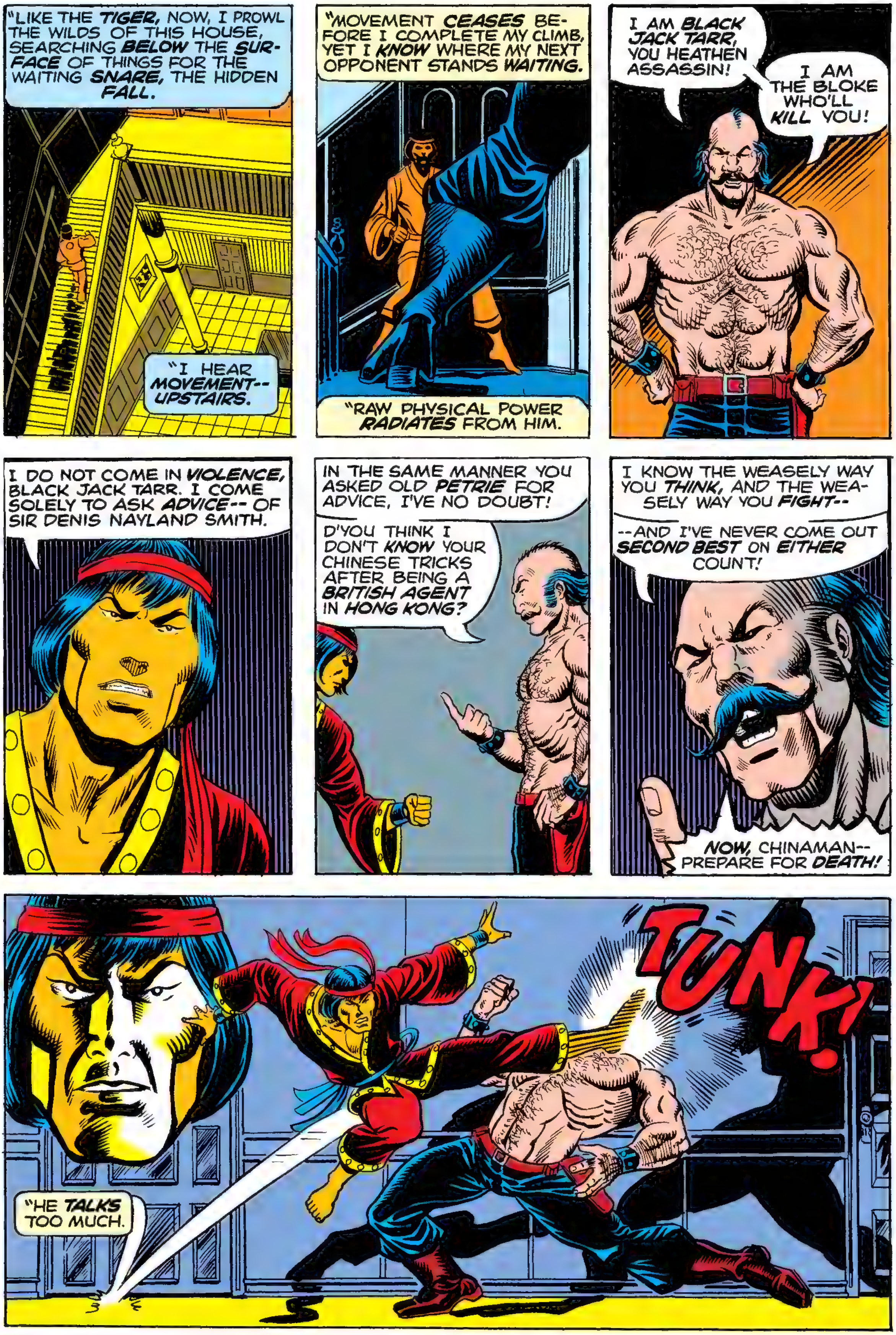

MISSED HIM!
WHY?!! DID HE HEAR THE RUSHING AIR OF THE CHANDELIER'S FALL? DID HE SEE ITS DESCENDING SHADOW?
WELL, THIS TIME THERE SHALL BE NO ESCAPE!
"OAKEN PANELS BLOCK THE HALL AT BOTH ENDS! THEIR SOLID BOOM BETRAYS A THICKNESS OF AT LEAST SIX INCHES!
"NOW: GAS!
"MY MIND BECOMES MIST WITH THE FIRST BREATH! POISON FILLS THIS BILLOWING FOG!
"BUT I AM WELL-TRAINED! I STILL MY LUNGS-- GATHER MY THOUGHTS. I STAND QUIETLY... FORGETTING FEAR ... RELAXING...
"...CONCENTRATING...
"...FEELING...
"...FEELING...
FI--YA!
CRUMP!
INCREDIBLE! THE MAN IS THE FINEST FIGHTING MACHINE I'VE EVER SEEN! BUT HE'LL BE GROGGY NOW--
--NO MATCH FOR THE ULTIMATE MECHANICAL MENACE!
THIS IS HIS FINISH!
CREAK!
"EH--?

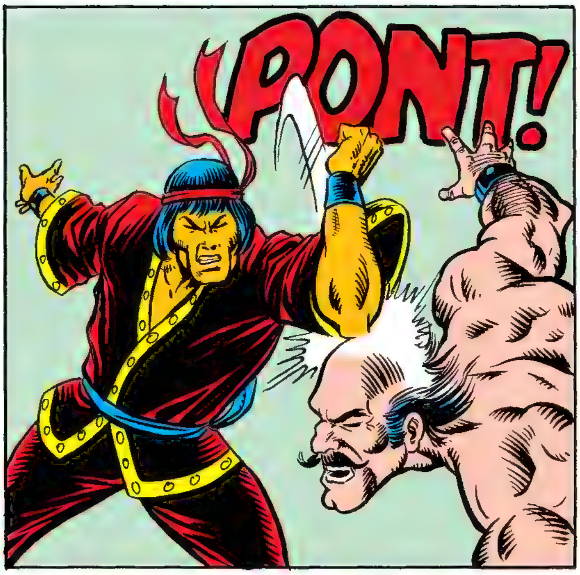

"I UNDERSTAND THAT I CAN MOVE BEFORE MY NEWEST ASSAILANT TOUCHES ME-- BUT MY INGRAINED DEFENSIVE MOVEMENT IS ARRESTED FOR A PULSEBEAT BY THE RAPID APPROACH OF THREE OTHERS--
"--AND THE SUDDEN REALIZATION THAT THESE MEN WEAR AN INGENIOUS ARMOR, EFFECTIVELY DESIGNED TO PROTECT THEIR EVERY VITAL POINT!
"THE SUSPENSION OF MY MOVEMENT IS FOOLISH AND NOT WITHOUT COST! BY ONE PULSEBEAT, I RECOVER MYSELF, BUT I CAN NOT AVOID THE METALLIC FOREARM THAT SWEEPS ACROSS MY THROAT--

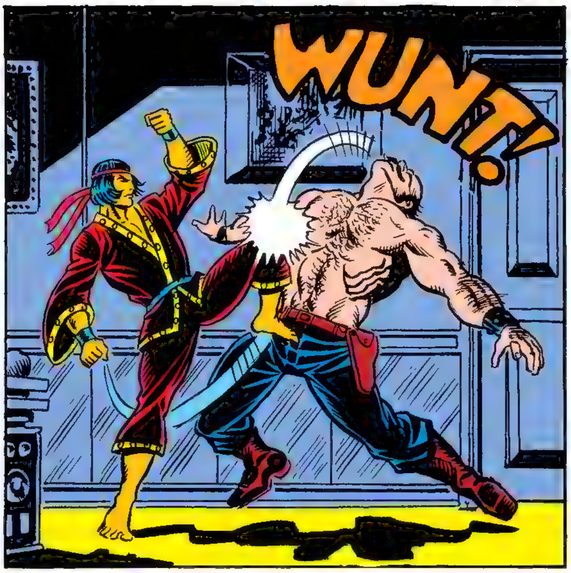

"--BUT MY THROAT IS NOT A LETHAL WEAPON--
TUNG!
"-- UNLIKE MY FOOT!
"FOOT TAKES PRECEDENCE OVER THROAT BECAUSE THE MAN IN FRONT IS THE MORE IMMEDIATE THREAT!
"TO FORESTALL A KILLING SNAP! I TENSED AND TURNED MY NECK ENOUGH WHEN THE MAN BEHIND FIRST SEIZED ME!
"HE IS UNIMPORTANT UNTIL I AM READY TO DISLODGE HIM--EH?
"THE MAN WITH THE LANCE RISES! HE SHOULD BE UNCONSCIOUS!
"THESE SUITS OF ARMOR MUST BE PADDED TO DEADEN MY BLOWS--BUT WHEN I ROLL THE MAN BEHIND ME ACROSS MY SHOULDER--
"-- IT WILL MAKE LITTLE DIFFERENCE!
"NO! HE SPLINTERS THE FLOOR WITH HIS LANDING, BUT IS INSTANTANEOUSLY SCRAMBLING TO HIS FEET! HOW CAN THIS BE?
"WARNING! ANOTHER BEHIND--!
"CONCENTRATE! CONCENTRATE! IGNORE WONDERMENT!
"THINK ONLY OF THE BATTLE! THINK ONLY OF THE FLOW!

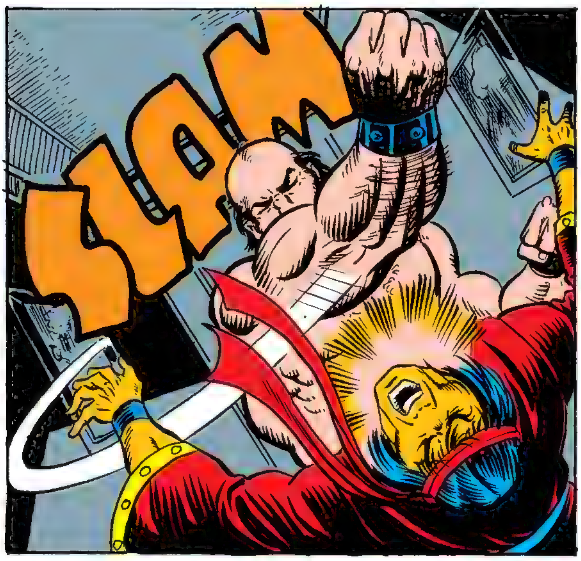

HE'S **RATTLED!** HIS FIGHTING SKILL ISN'T **HELPING** HIM!
WE'VE **GOT** HIM!
"**SURROUNDED!** I HAVE DONE MY BEST, BUT THAT HAS NOT **SAVED** ME.
"IF MY LIFE IS TO END **HERE,** SO BE--
"**NO!** AT LAST I SEE THE **ANSWER!**
KIII--
KTANG
AI!
"I WAS **CORRECT!** I COULD NOT STOP THEM BECAUSE THEY HAD NO **LIFE!**
"THEY WERE **MACHINES!**
ZZZZZZZT
RRAM!

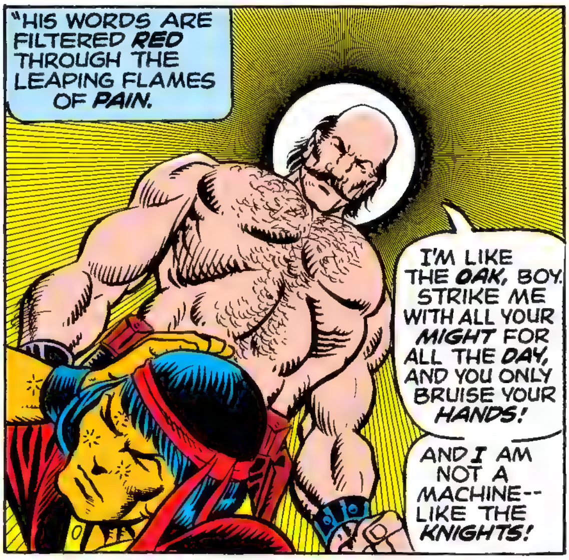

LOOK AT HIM, BLACK JACK! LOOK AT HIM!
DESPITE MYSELF, I ALMOST ADMIRE THE MAN!
ALMOST!
BLAM!
RAM!
"THIS EPISODE IS ENDED. NOW I MAY ALLOW WONDERMENT TO FLOWER.
"MECHANICAL MEN--CONTROLLED BY SOMEONE UNSEEN! NEVER BEFORE HAVE MY EYES MET SUCH THINGS!
"NO, AND NEITHER HAVE MY HANDS.
"WERE THEY NOT HARDENED WITH YEARS OF TRAINING...
HE'S A RARE ONE, ALL RIGHT! ANY NORMAL MAN'S FINGERS WOULD BE PASTE!
BUT I'D SAVE MY ADMIRATION, IF I WERE YOU, SIR. HE'S ONLY A CHINAMAN--
-AND SOON TO BE A DEAD ONE, AT THAT.

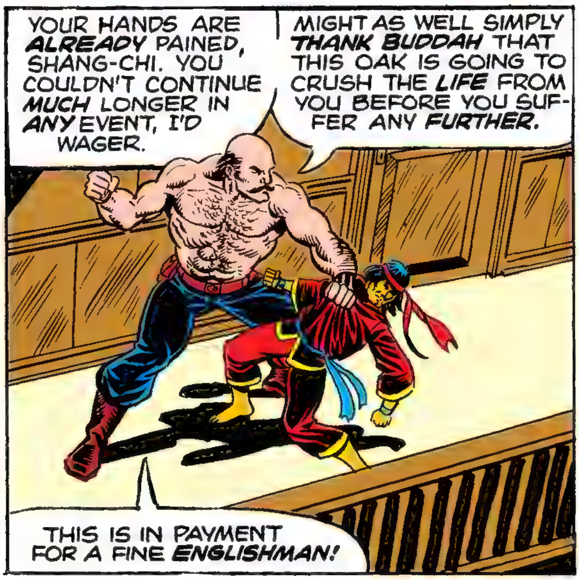

"LIKE THE *TIGER*, NOW, I PROWL THE WILDS OF THIS HOUSE, SEARCHING *BELOW* THE *SURFACE* OF THINGS FOR THE WAITING *SNARE*, THE HIDDEN *FALL*.
"I HEAR *MOVEMENT*-- *UPSTAIRS*.
"MOVEMENT *CEASES* BEFORE I COMPLETE MY CLIMB, YET I *KNOW* WHERE MY NEXT OPPONENT STANDS *WAITING*.
"RAW PHYSICAL POWER *RADIATES* FROM HIM.
I AM *BLACK JACK TARR*, YOU HEATHEN ASSASSIN!
I AM THE BLOKE WHO'LL *KILL* YOU!
I DO NOT COME IN *VIOLENCE*, BLACK JACK TARR. I COME SOLELY TO ASK *ADVICE*-- OF SIR DENIS NAYLAND SMITH.
IN THE SAME MANNER YOU ASKED OLD *PETRIE* FOR ADVICE, I'VE NO DOUBT!
D'YOU THINK I DON'T *KNOW* YOUR CHINESE TRICKS AFTER BEING A *BRITISH AGENT* IN *HONG KONG*?
I KNOW THE WEASELY WAY YOU *THINK*, AND THE WEASELY WAY YOU *FIGHT*--
--AND I'VE NEVER COME OUT *SECOND BEST* ON *EITHER* COUNT!
NOW, CHINAMAN-- PREPARE FOR *DEATH*!
TUNK!
"HE *TALKS* TOO MUCH.

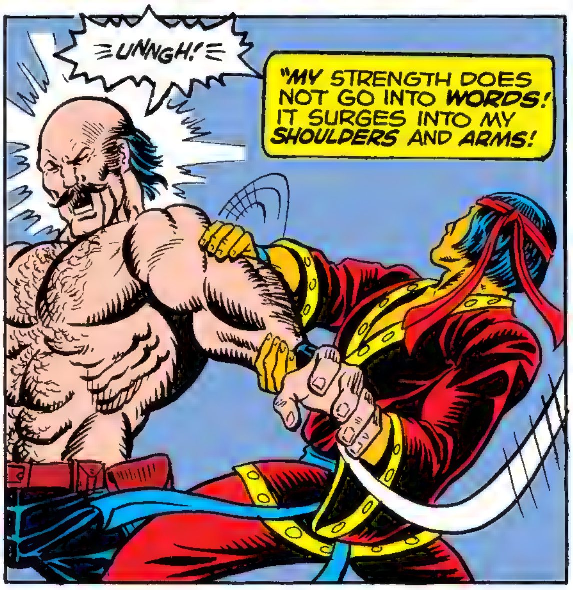

PONT!

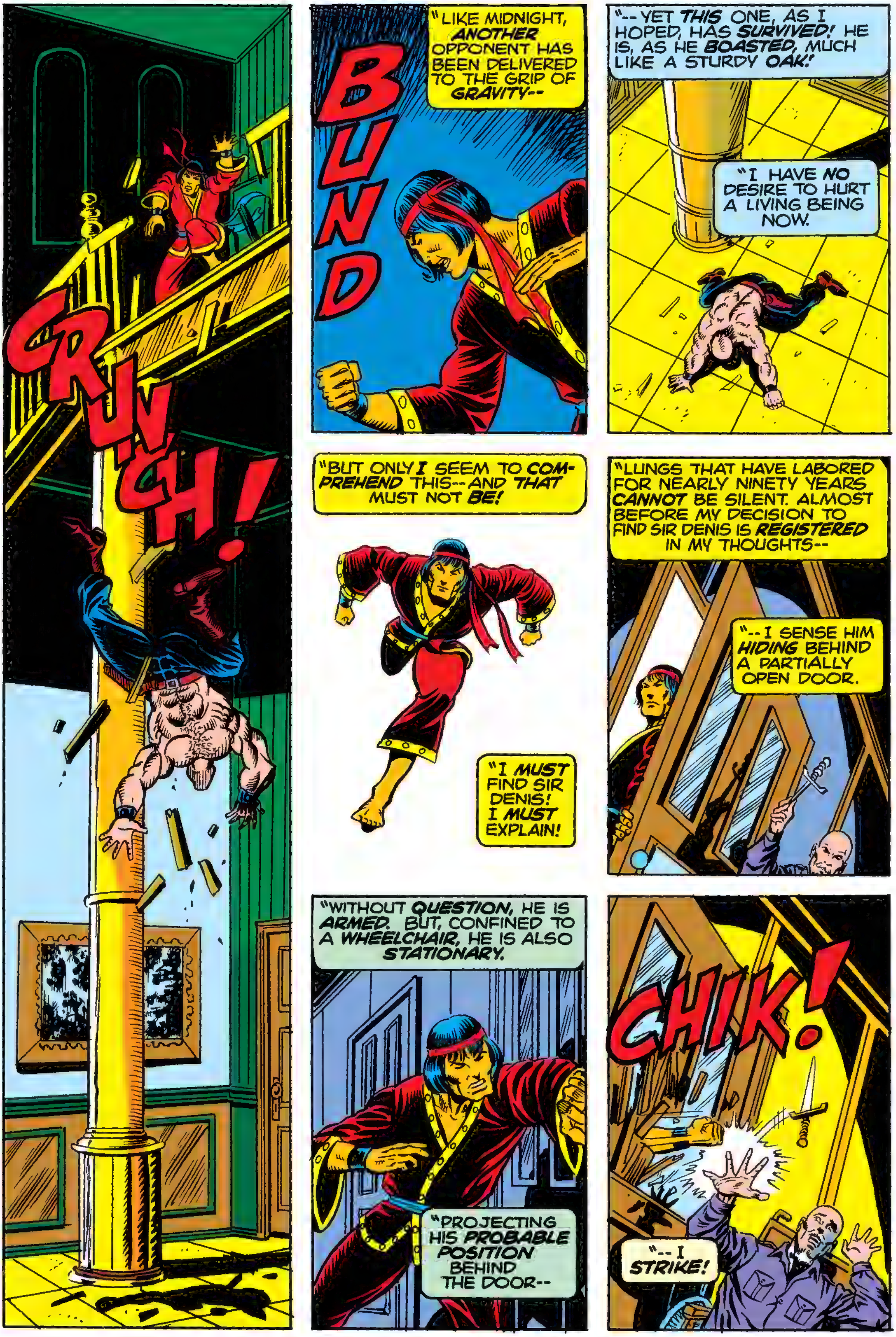

WUNT!

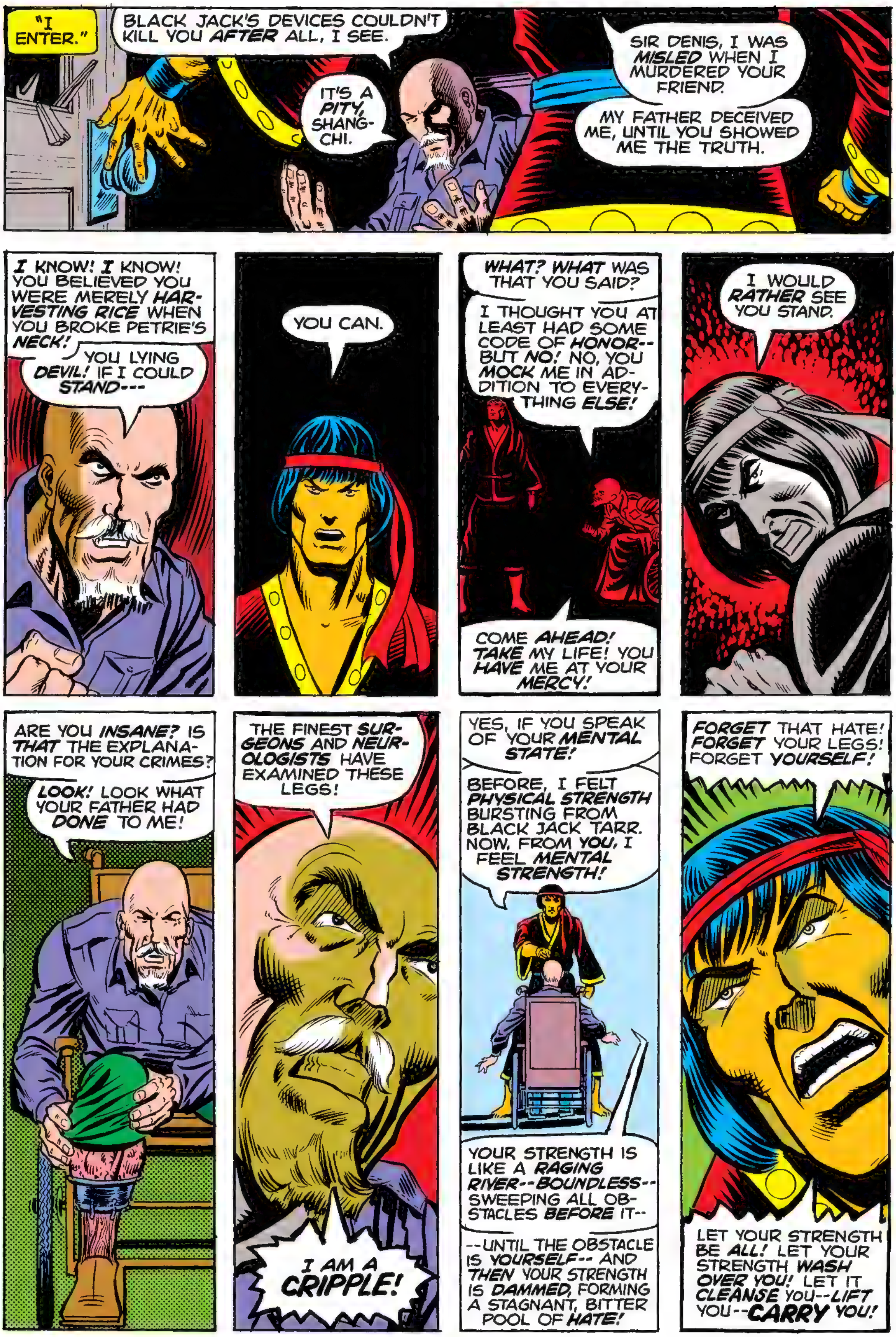

SLAM

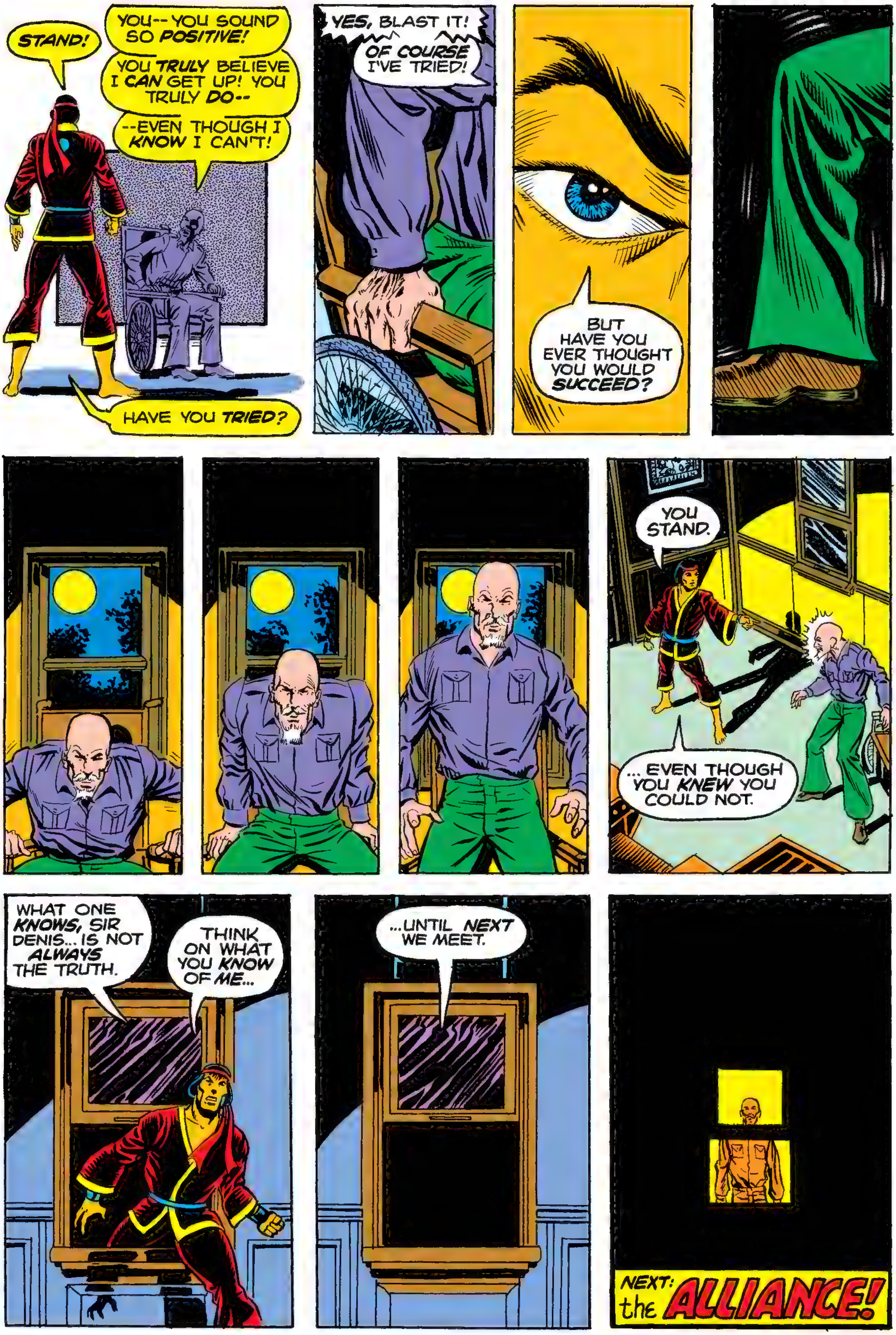

"HIS WORDS ARE FILTERED *RED* THROUGH THE LEAPING FLAMES OF *PAIN.*
I'M LIKE THE *OAK,* BOY. STRIKE ME WITH ALL YOUR *MIGHT* FOR ALL THE *DAY,* AND YOU ONLY BRUISE YOUR *HANDS!*
AND *I* AM NOT A MACHINE-- LIKE THE *KNIGHTS!*

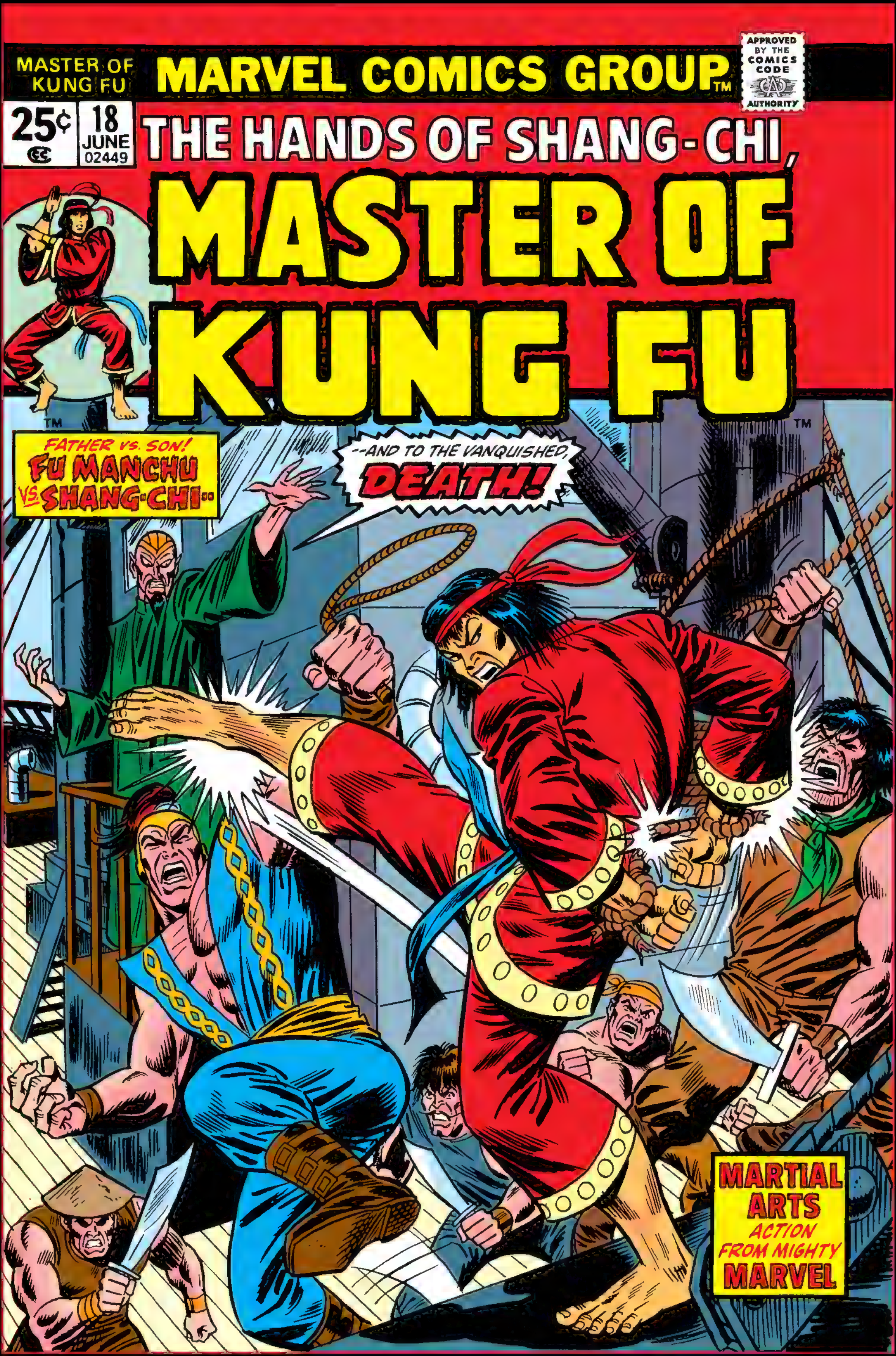

YOUR HANDS ARE *ALREADY* PAINED, SHANG-CHI. YOU COULDN'T CONTINUE *MUCH* LONGER IN *ANY* EVENT, I'D WAGER.
MIGHT AS WELL SIMPLY *THANK BUDDAH* THAT THIS OAK IS GOING TO CRUSH THE *LIFE* FROM YOU BEFORE YOU SUFFER ANY *FURTHER.*
THIS IS IN PAYMENT FOR A FINE *ENGLISHMAN!*


UNNGH!
"*MY* STRENGTH DOES NOT GO INTO *WORDS!* IT SURGES INTO MY *SHOULDERS* AND *ARMS!*


CRUNCH!
"LIKE MIDNIGHT, ANOTHER OPPONENT HAS BEEN DELIVERED TO THE GRIP OF GRAVITY--
BUND
"--YET THIS ONE, AS I HOPED, HAS SURVIVED! HE IS, AS HE BOASTED, MUCH LIKE A STURDY OAK!
"I HAVE NO DESIRE TO HURT A LIVING BEING NOW.
"BUT ONLY I SEEM TO COMPREHEND THIS--AND THAT MUST NOT BE!
"I MUST FIND SIR DENIS! I MUST EXPLAIN!
"LUNGS THAT HAVE LABORED FOR NEARLY NINETY YEARS CANNOT BE SILENT. ALMOST BEFORE MY DECISION TO FIND SIR DENIS IS REGISTERED IN MY THOUGHTS--
"--I SENSE HIM HIDING BEHIND A PARTIALLY OPEN DOOR.
"WITHOUT QUESTION, HE IS ARMED. BUT, CONFINED TO A WHEELCHAIR, HE IS ALSO STATIONARY.
"PROJECTING HIS PROBABLE POSITION BEHIND THE DOOR--
CHIK!
"--I STRIKE!


"I ENTER."
BLACK JACK'S DEVICES COULDN'T KILL YOU *AFTER* ALL, I SEE.
IT'S A *PITY*, SHANG-CHI.
SIR DENIS, I WAS *MISLED* WHEN I MURDERED YOUR FRIEND.
MY FATHER DECEIVED ME, UNTIL YOU SHOWED ME THE TRUTH.
I KNOW! *I* KNOW! YOU BELIEVED YOU WERE MERELY *HARVESTING RICE* WHEN YOU BROKE PETRIE'S *NECK!*
YOU LYING *DEVIL!* IF I COULD *STAND*---
YOU CAN.
WHAT? WHAT WAS THAT YOU SAID?
I THOUGHT YOU AT LEAST HAD SOME CODE OF *HONOR*-- BUT *NO!* NO, YOU *MOCK* ME IN ADDITION TO EVERYTHING *ELSE!*
COME *AHEAD! TAKE* MY LIFE! YOU *HAVE* ME AT YOUR *MERCY!*
I WOULD *RATHER* SEE YOU STAND.
ARE YOU *INSANE?* IS *THAT* THE EXPLANATION FOR YOUR CRIMES?
LOOK! LOOK WHAT YOUR FATHER HAD *DONE* TO ME!
THE FINEST *SURGEONS* AND *NEUROLOGISTS* HAVE EXAMINED THESE LEGS!
I AM A CRIPPLE!
YES, IF YOU SPEAK OF YOUR *MENTAL STATE!*
BEFORE, I FELT *PHYSICAL STRENGTH* BURSTING FROM BLACK JACK TARR. NOW, FROM *YOU*, I FEEL *MENTAL STRENGTH!*
YOUR STRENGTH IS LIKE A *RAGING RIVER--BOUNDLESS--* SWEEPING ALL OBSTACLES *BEFORE* IT--
--UNTIL THE OBSTACLE IS *YOURSELF--* AND *THEN* YOUR STRENGTH IS *DAMMED*, FORMING A STAGNANT, BITTER POOL OF *HATE!*
FORGET THAT HATE! *FORGET* YOUR LEGS! FORGET *YOURSELF!*
LET YOUR STRENGTH BE *ALL!* LET YOUR STRENGTH *WASH OVER YOU!* LET IT *CLEANSE* YOU--*LIFT* YOU--*CARRY* YOU!


STAND!
YOU--YOU SOUND SO POSITIVE!
YOU TRULY BELIEVE I CAN GET UP! YOU TRULY DO--
--EVEN THOUGH I KNOW I CAN'T!
HAVE YOU TRIED?
YES, BLAST IT! OF COURSE I'VE TRIED!
BUT HAVE YOU EVER THOUGHT YOU WOULD SUCCEED?
YOU STAND.
...EVEN THOUGH YOU KNEW YOU COULD NOT.
WHAT ONE KNOWS, SIR DENIS... IS NOT ALWAYS THE TRUTH.
THINK ON WHAT YOU KNOW OF ME...
...UNTIL NEXT WE MEET.
NEXT: the ALLIANCE!


MASTER OF KUNG FU
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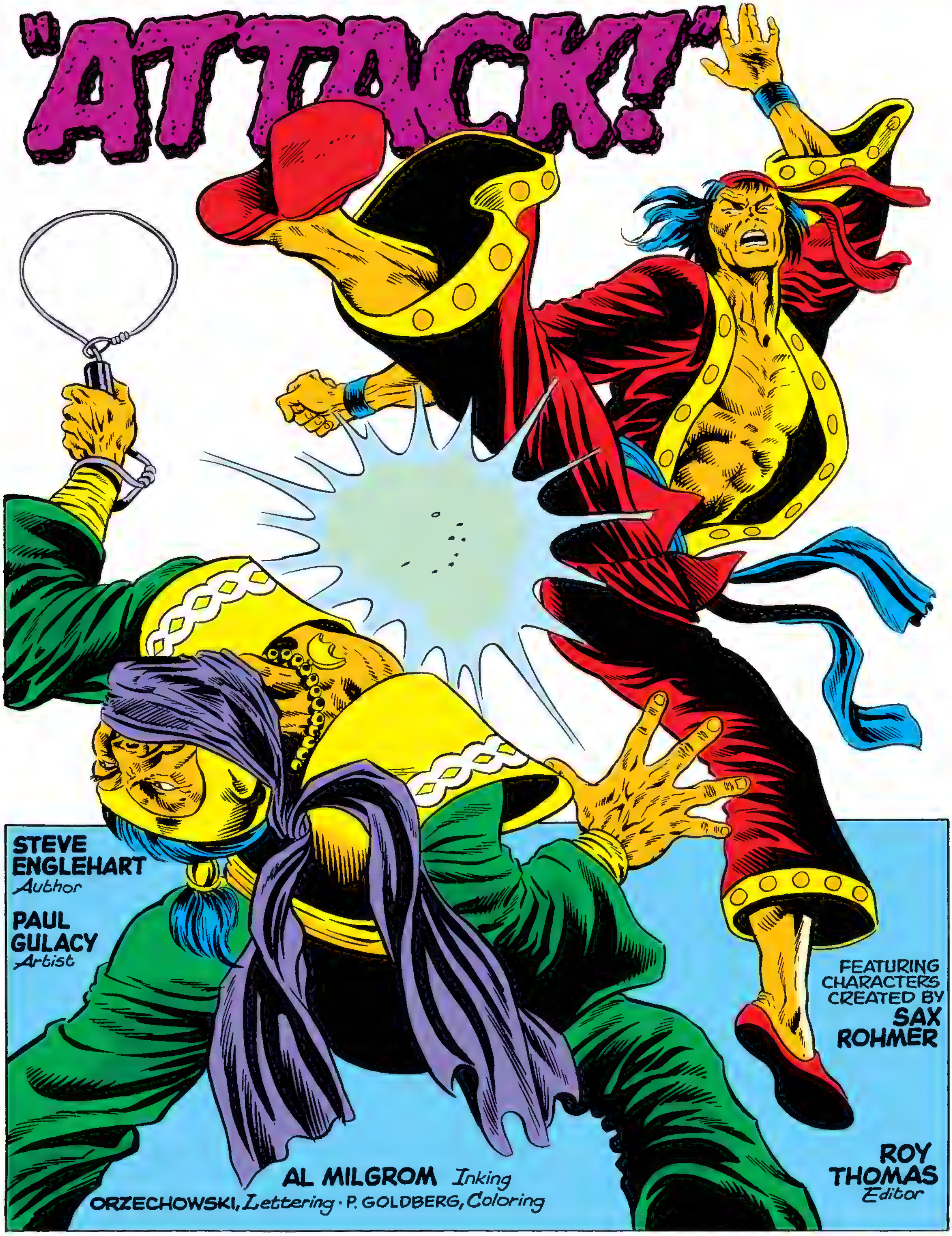
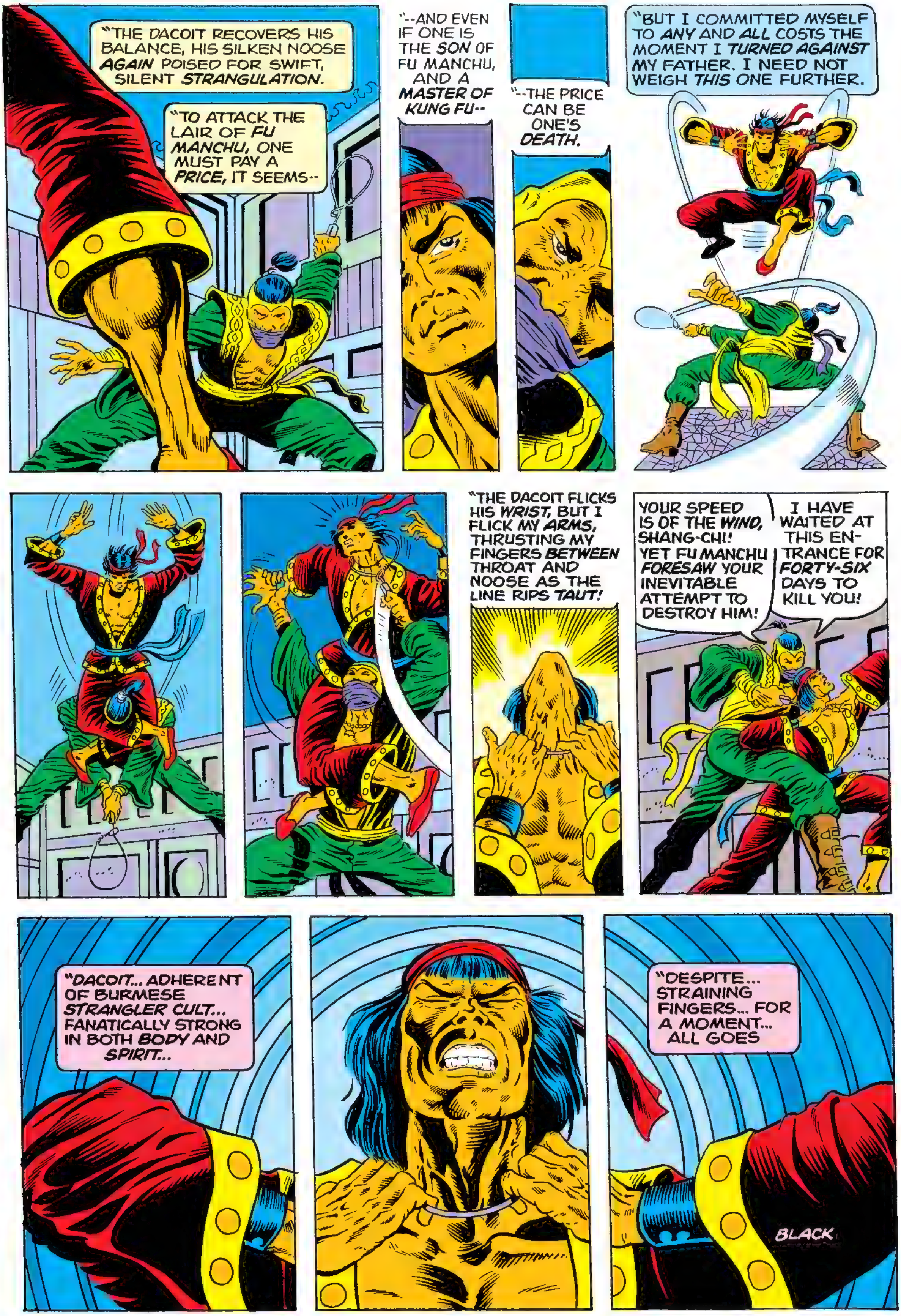
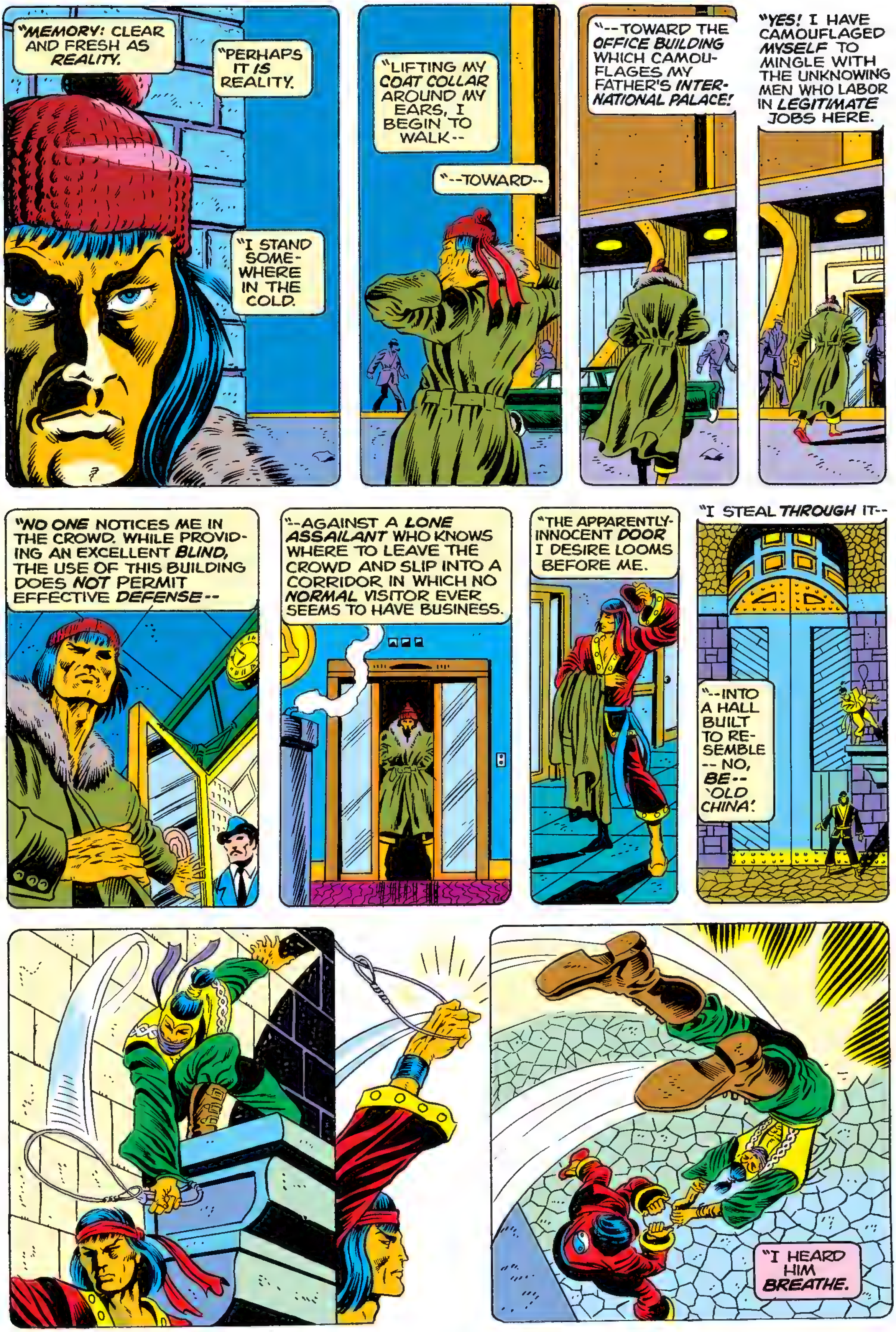
18 JUNE 02449
THE HANDS OF SHANG-CHI,
MASTER OF KUNG FU
™
FATHER VS. SON! FU MANCHU VS. SHANG-CHI--
--AND TO THE VANQUISHED, DEATH!
MARTIAL ARTS ACTION FROM MIGHTY MARVEL

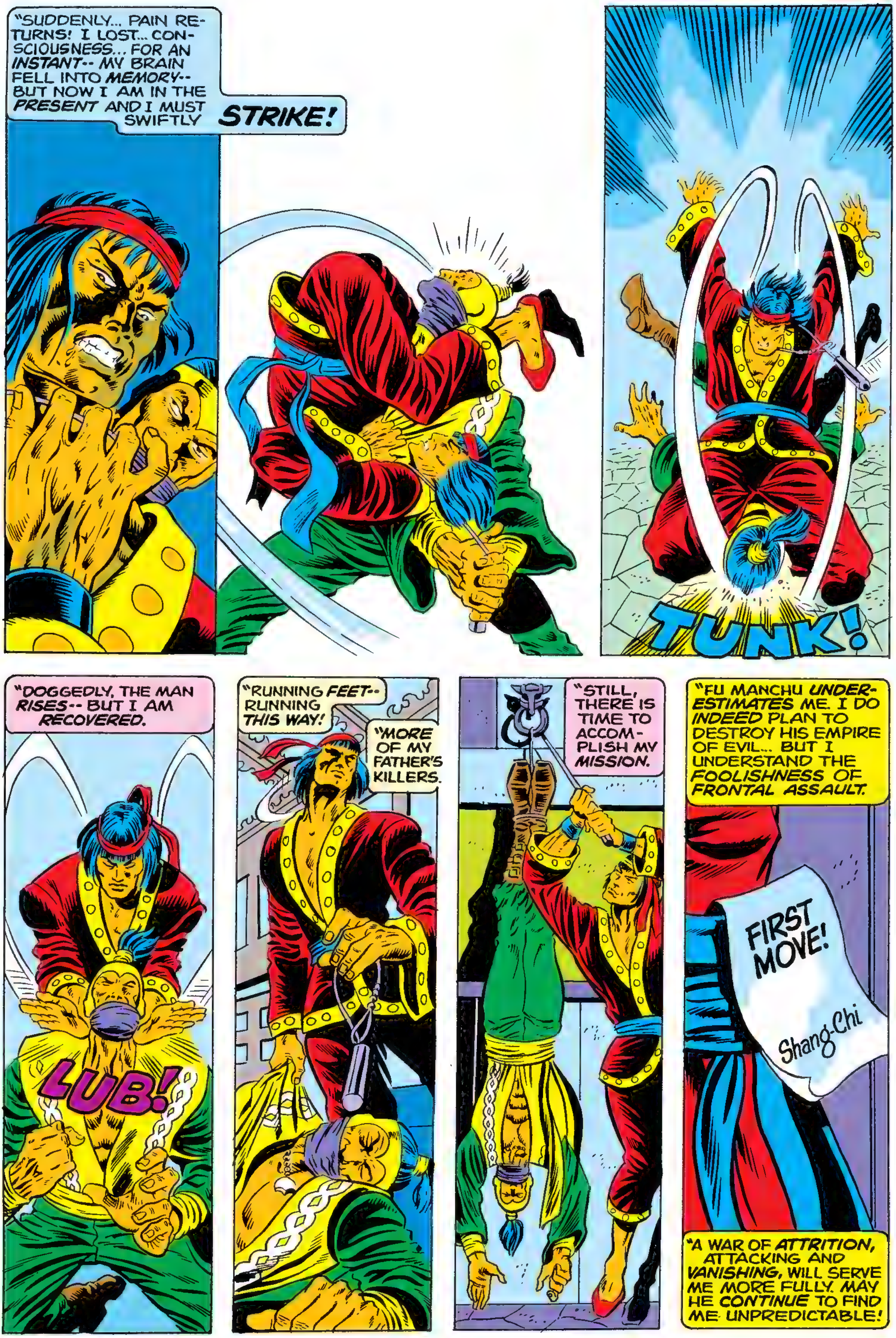
Stan Lee PRESENTS:

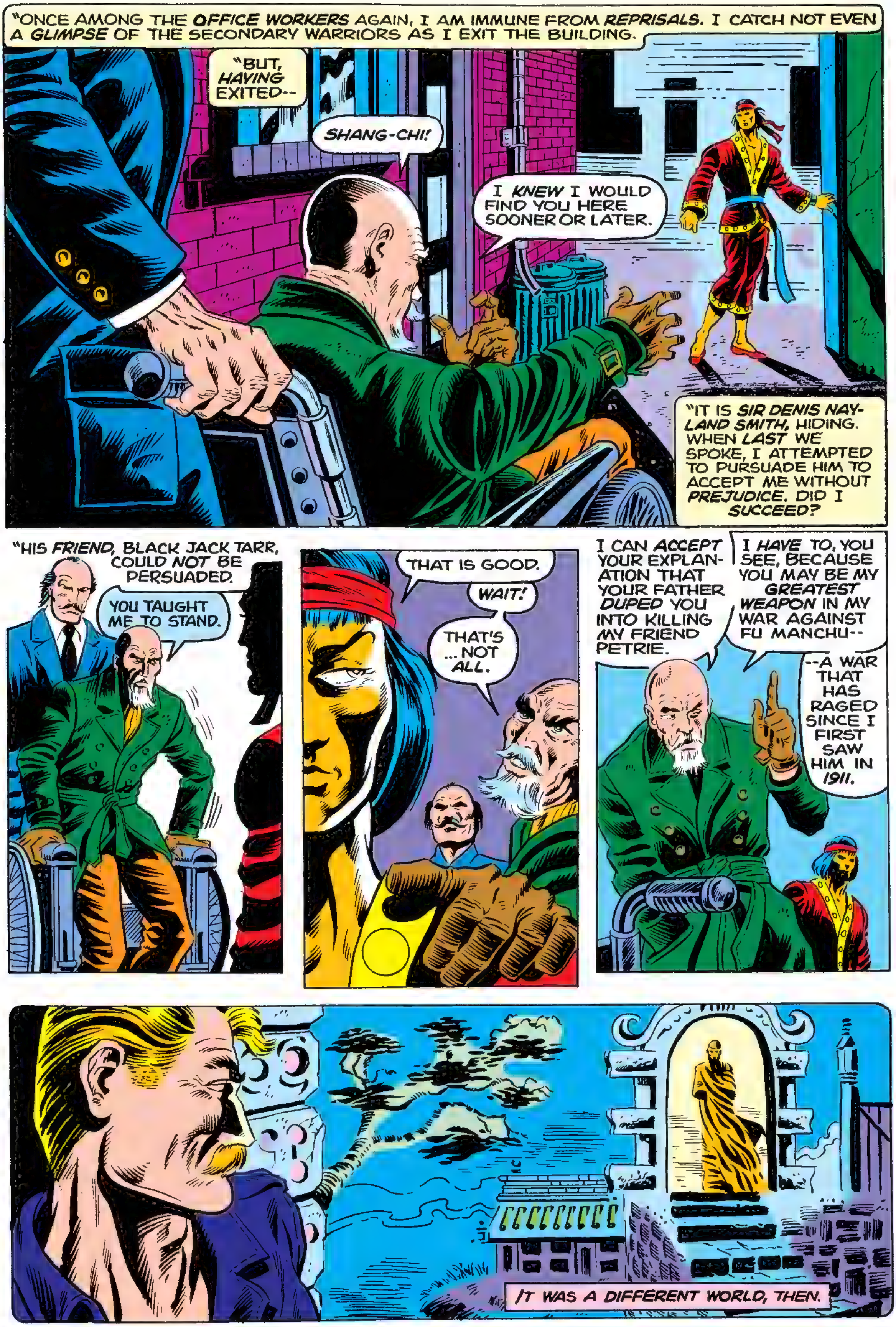
MASTER OF KUNG FU!™

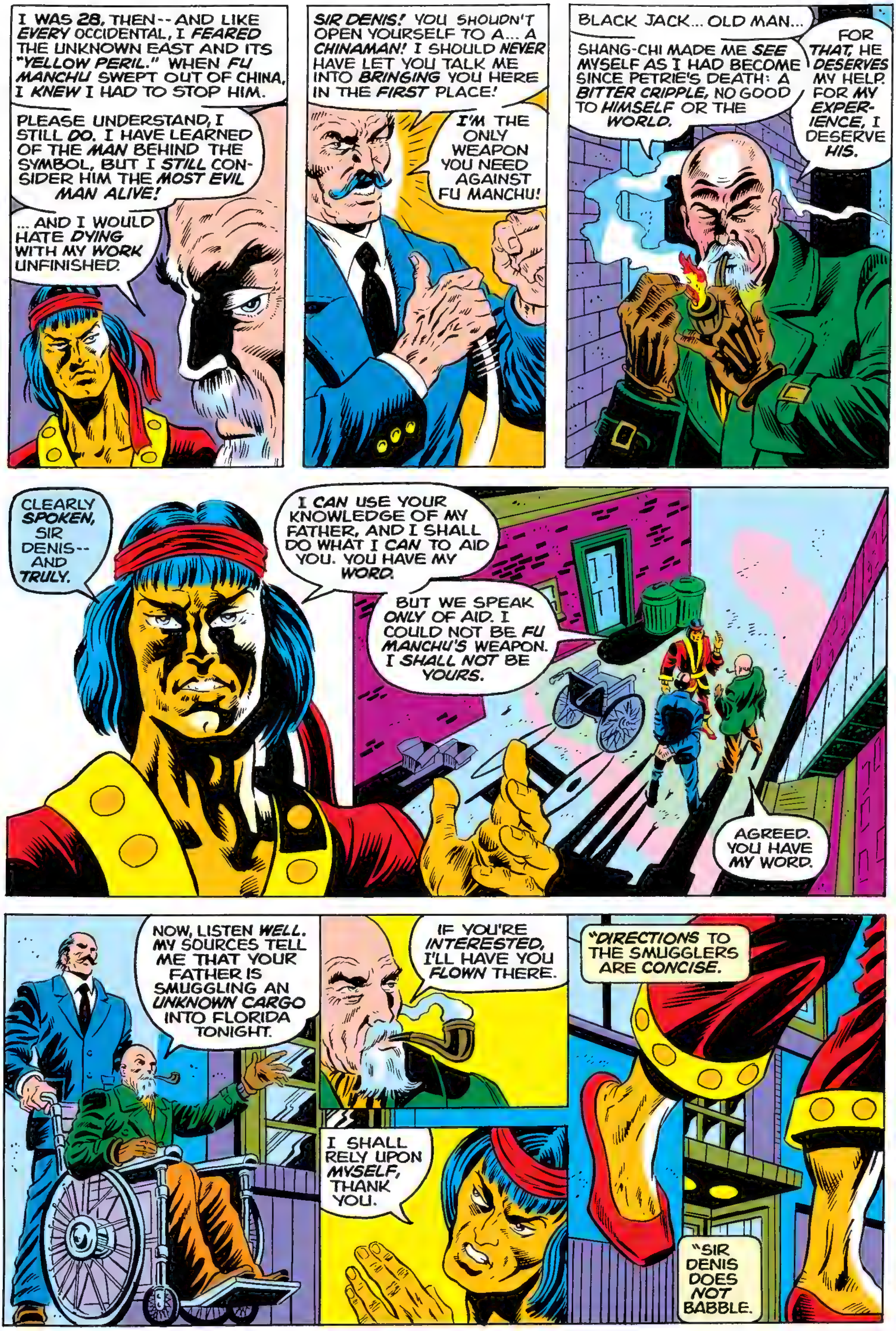

"ATTACK!"
STEVE ENGLEHART Author
PAUL GULACY Artist
FEATURING CHARACTERS CREATED BY SAX ROHMER
AL MILGROM Inking
ORZECHOWSKI, Lettering · P. GOLDBERG, Coloring
ROY THOMAS Editor

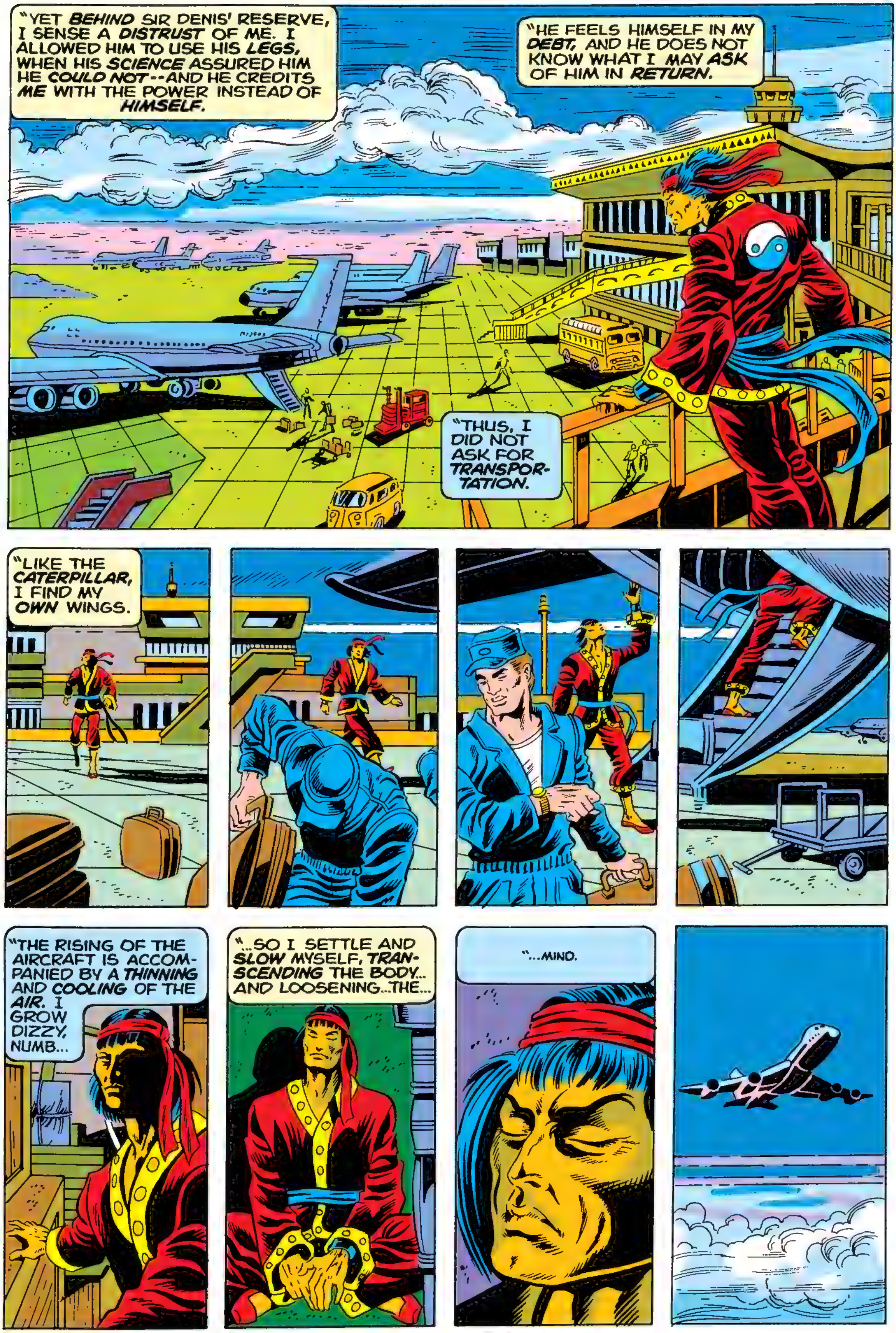

"THE DACOIT RECOVERS HIS BALANCE, HIS SILKEN NOOSE *AGAIN* POISED FOR SWIFT, SILENT *STRANGULATION*.
"TO ATTACK THE LAIR OF *FU MANCHU*, ONE MUST PAY A *PRICE*, IT SEEMS--
"--AND EVEN IF ONE IS THE *SON* OF FU MANCHU, AND A *MASTER OF KUNG FU*--
"--THE PRICE CAN BE ONE'S *DEATH*.
"BUT I COMMITTED MYSELF TO *ANY* AND *ALL* COSTS THE MOMENT I *TURNED AGAINST* MY FATHER. I NEED NOT WEIGH *THIS* ONE FURTHER.
"THE DACOIT FLICKS HIS *WRIST*, BUT I FLICK MY *ARMS*, THRUSTING MY FINGERS *BETWEEN* THROAT AND NOOSE AS THE LINE RIPS *TAUT*!
YOUR SPEED IS OF THE *WIND*, SHANG-CHI! YET FU MANCHU *FORESAW* YOUR INEVITABLE ATTEMPT TO DESTROY HIM!
I HAVE WAITED AT THIS ENTRANCE FOR *FORTY-SIX* DAYS TO KILL YOU!
"*DACOIT*... ADHERENT OF BURMESE *STRANGLER CULT*... FANATICALLY STRONG IN BOTH *BODY* AND *SPIRIT*...
"DESPITE... STRAINING FINGERS... FOR A MOMENT... ALL GOES
BLACK

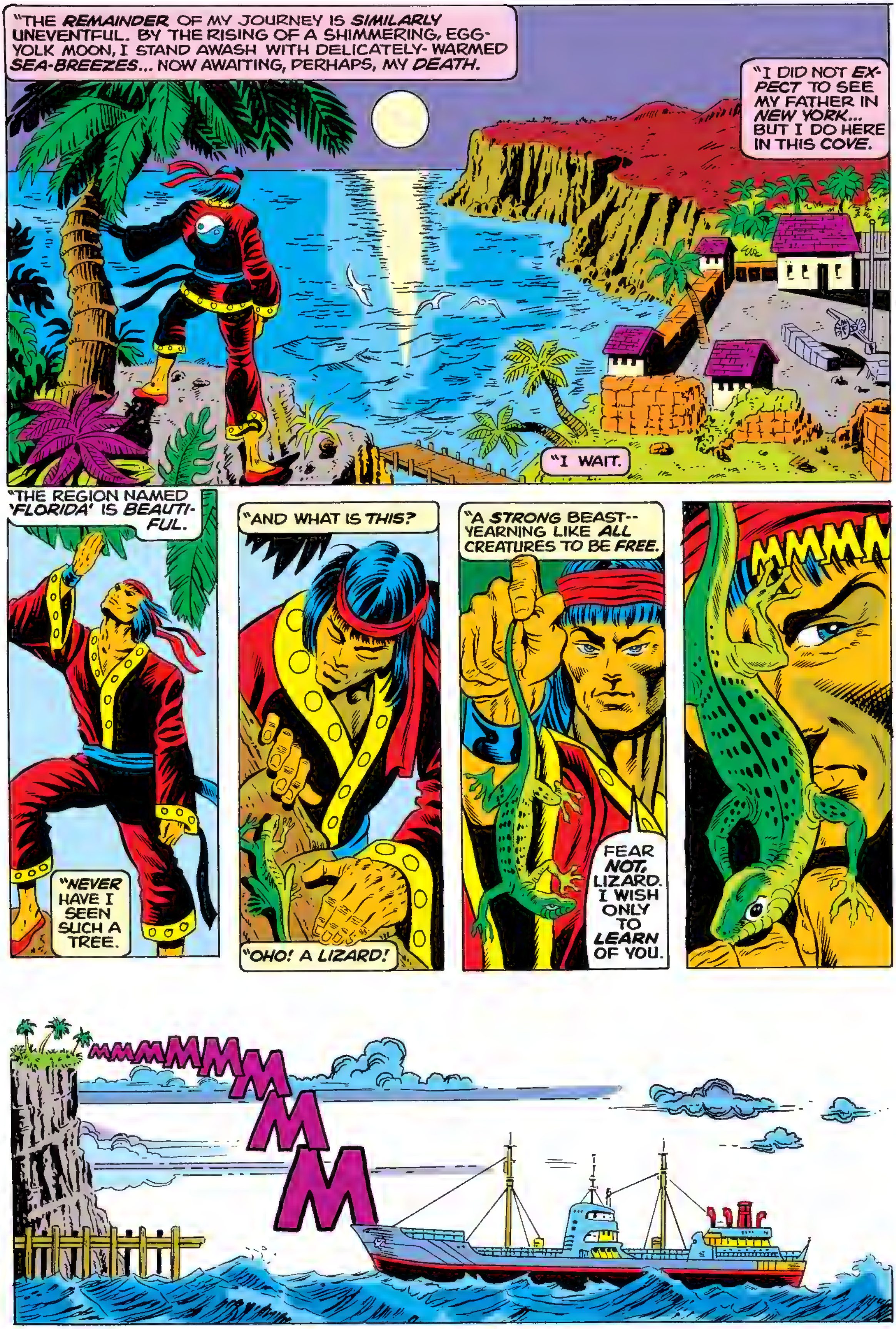

"MEMORY: CLEAR AND FRESH AS REALITY.
"PERHAPS IT IS REALITY.
"I STAND SOMEWHERE IN THE COLD.
"LIFTING MY COAT COLLAR AROUND MY EARS, I BEGIN TO WALK--
"--TOWARD--
"--TOWARD THE OFFICE BUILDING WHICH CAMOUFLAGES MY FATHER'S INTERNATIONAL PALACE!
"YES! I HAVE CAMOUFLAGED MYSELF TO MINGLE WITH THE UNKNOWING MEN WHO LABOR IN LEGITIMATE JOBS HERE.
"NO ONE NOTICES ME IN THE CROWD. WHILE PROVIDING AN EXCELLENT BLIND, THE USE OF THIS BUILDING DOES NOT PERMIT EFFECTIVE DEFENSE--
"--AGAINST A LONE ASSAILANT WHO KNOWS WHERE TO LEAVE THE CROWD AND SLIP INTO A CORRIDOR IN WHICH NO NORMAL VISITOR EVER SEEMS TO HAVE BUSINESS.
"THE APPARENTLY-INNOCENT DOOR I DESIRE LOOMS BEFORE ME.
"I STEAL THROUGH IT--
"--INTO A HALL BUILT TO RESEMBLE -- NO, BE-- 'OLD CHINA'.
"I HEARD HIM BREATHE.

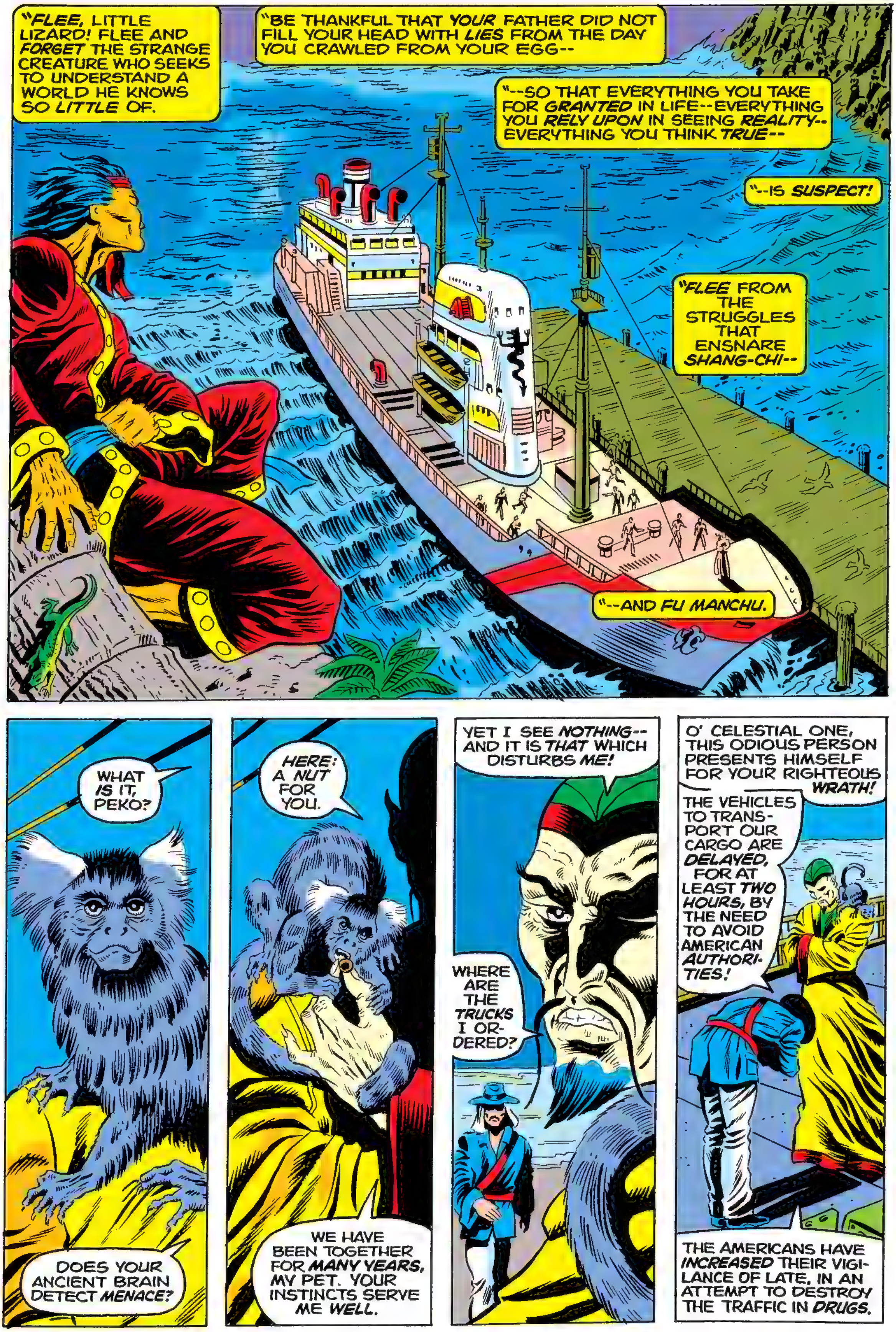

"SUDDENLY... PAIN RETURNS! I LOST... CONSCIOUSNESS... FOR AN INSTANT-- MY BRAIN FELL INTO MEMORY-- BUT NOW I AM IN THE PRESENT AND I MUST SWIFTLY STRIKE!
TUNK!
"DOGGEDLY, THE MAN RISES-- BUT I AM RECOVERED.
LUB!
"RUNNING FEET-- RUNNING THIS WAY!
"MORE OF MY FATHER'S KILLERS.
"STILL, THERE IS TIME TO ACCOMPLISH MY MISSION.
"FU MANCHU UNDERESTIMATES ME. I DO INDEED PLAN TO DESTROY HIS EMPIRE OF EVIL... BUT I UNDERSTAND THE FOOLISHNESS OF FRONTAL ASSAULT.
FIRST MOVE!
Shang-Chi
"A WAR OF ATTRITION, ATTACKING AND VANISHING, WILL SERVE ME MORE FULLY. MAY HE CONTINUE TO FIND ME UNPREDICTABLE!

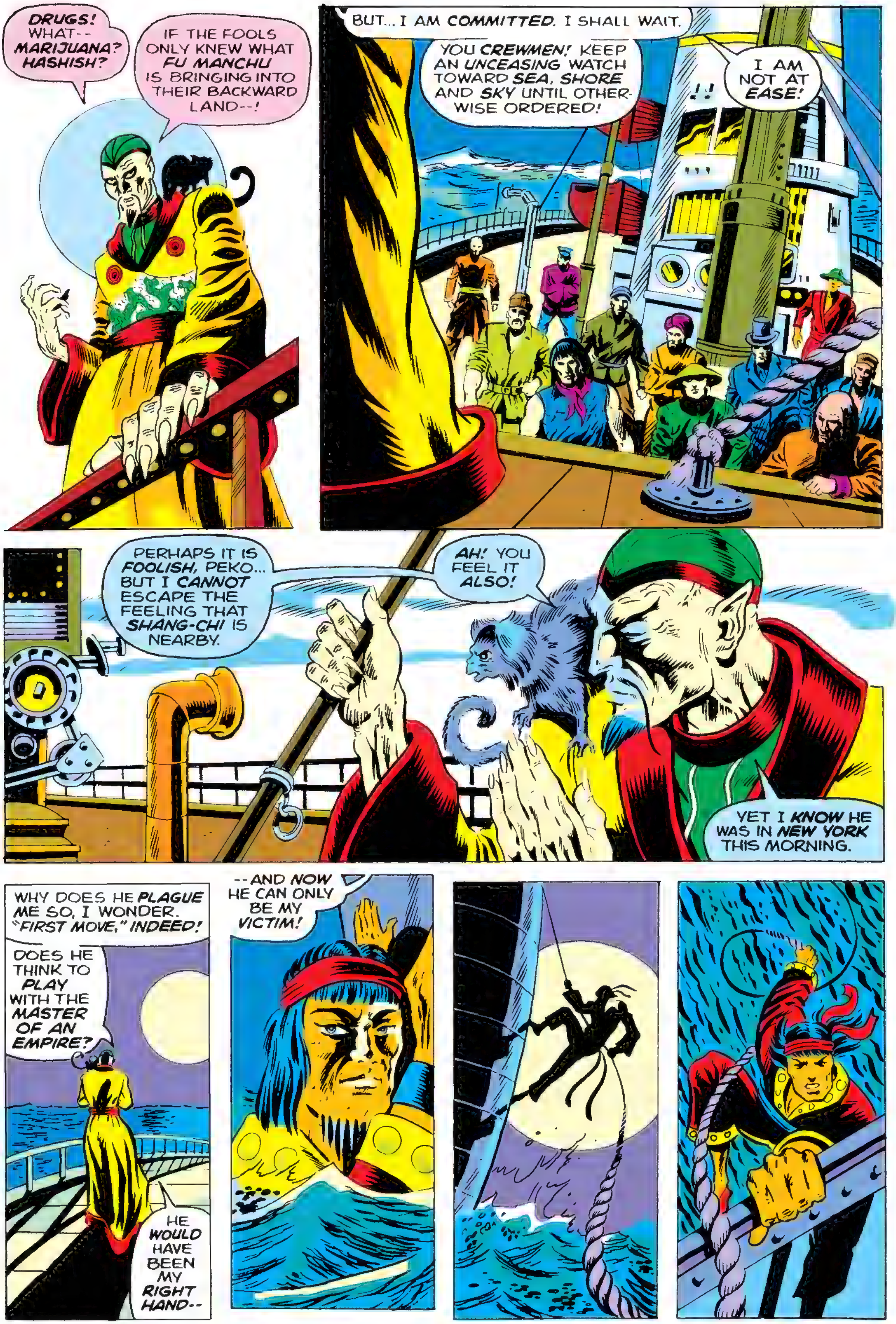

"ONCE AMONG THE *OFFICE WORKERS* AGAIN, I AM IMMUNE FROM *REPRISALS*. I CATCH NOT EVEN A *GLIMPSE* OF THE SECONDARY WARRIORS AS I EXIT THE BUILDING.
"BUT, *HAVING* EXITED--
SHANG-CHI!
I *KNEW* I WOULD FIND YOU HERE SOONER OR LATER.
"IT IS *SIR DENIS NAYLAND SMITH,* HIDING. WHEN *LAST* WE SPOKE, I ATTEMPTED TO PURSUADE HIM TO ACCEPT ME WITHOUT *PREJUDICE*. DID I *SUCCEED?*
"HIS *FRIEND,* BLACK JACK TARR, COULD *NOT* BE PERSUADED.
YOU TAUGHT ME TO STAND.
THAT IS GOOD.
WAIT!
THAT'S ...NOT *ALL*.
I CAN *ACCEPT* YOUR EXPLANATION THAT YOUR FATHER *DUPED* YOU INTO KILLING MY FRIEND PETRIE.
I *HAVE* TO, YOU SEE, BECAUSE YOU MAY BE MY *GREATEST WEAPON* IN MY WAR AGAINST FU MANCHU--
--A WAR THAT HAS RAGED SINCE I FIRST SAW HIM IN *1911*.
IT WAS A DIFFERENT WORLD, THEN.

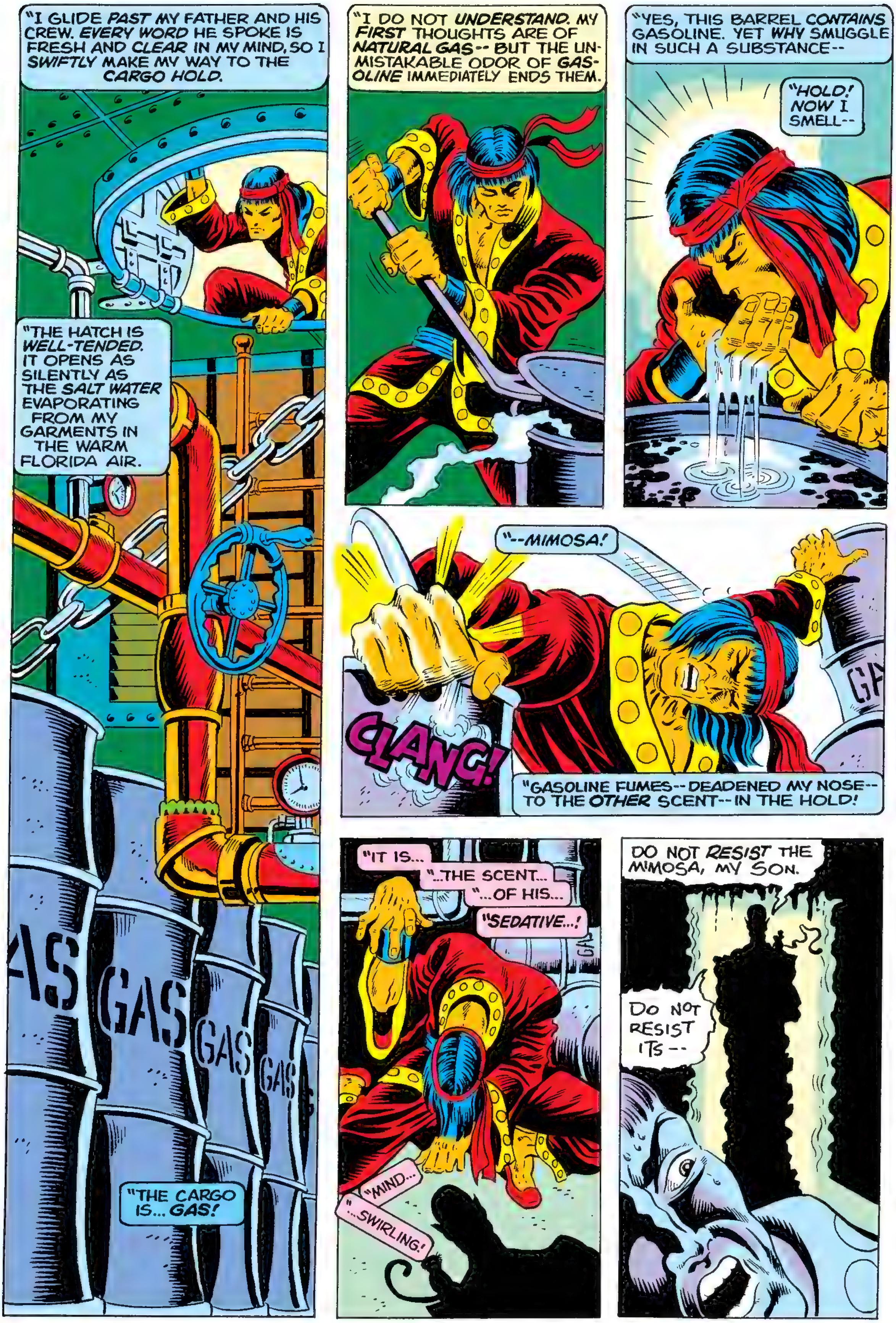

I WAS 28, THEN--AND LIKE EVERY OCCIDENTAL, I FEARED THE UNKNOWN EAST AND ITS "YELLOW PERIL." WHEN FU MANCHU SWEPT OUT OF CHINA, I KNEW I HAD TO STOP HIM.
PLEASE UNDERSTAND, I STILL DO. I HAVE LEARNED OF THE MAN BEHIND THE SYMBOL, BUT I STILL CONSIDER HIM THE MOST EVIL MAN ALIVE!
...AND I WOULD HATE DYING WITH MY WORK UNFINISHED.
SIR DENIS! YOU SHOUDN'T OPEN YOURSELF TO A... A CHINAMAN! I SHOULD NEVER HAVE LET YOU TALK ME INTO BRINGING YOU HERE IN THE FIRST PLACE!
I'M THE ONLY WEAPON YOU NEED AGAINST FU MANCHU!
BLACK JACK... OLD MAN...
SHANG-CHI MADE ME SEE MYSELF AS I HAD BECOME SINCE PETRIE'S DEATH: A BITTER CRIPPLE, NO GOOD TO HIMSELF OR THE WORLD.
FOR THAT, HE DESERVES MY HELP. FOR MY EXPERIENCE, I DESERVE HIS.
CLEARLY SPOKEN, SIR DENIS--AND TRULY.
I CAN USE YOUR KNOWLEDGE OF MY FATHER, AND I SHALL DO WHAT I CAN TO AID YOU. YOU HAVE MY WORD.
BUT WE SPEAK ONLY OF AID. I COULD NOT BE FU MANCHU'S WEAPON. I SHALL NOT BE YOURS.
AGREED. YOU HAVE MY WORD.
NOW, LISTEN WELL. MY SOURCES TELL ME THAT YOUR FATHER IS SMUGGLING AN UNKNOWN CARGO INTO FLORIDA TONIGHT.
IF YOU'RE INTERESTED, I'LL HAVE YOU FLOWN THERE.
I SHALL RELY UPON MYSELF, THANK YOU.
"DIRECTIONS TO THE SMUGGLERS ARE CONCISE.
"SIR DENIS DOES NOT BABBLE.


"YET BEHIND SIR DENIS' RESERVE, I SENSE A DISTRUST OF ME. I ALLOWED HIM TO USE HIS LEGS, WHEN HIS SCIENCE ASSURED HIM HE COULD NOT--AND HE CREDITS ME WITH THE POWER INSTEAD OF HIMSELF.
"HE FEELS HIMSELF IN MY DEBT, AND HE DOES NOT KNOW WHAT I MAY ASK OF HIM IN RETURN.
"THUS, I DID NOT ASK FOR TRANSPORTATION.
"LIKE THE CATERPILLAR, I FIND MY OWN WINGS.
"THE RISING OF THE AIRCRAFT IS ACCOMPANIED BY A THINNING AND COOLING OF THE AIR. I GROW DIZZY, NUMB...
"...SO I SETTLE AND SLOW MYSELF, TRANSCENDING THE BODY... AND LOOSENING...THE...
"...MIND.

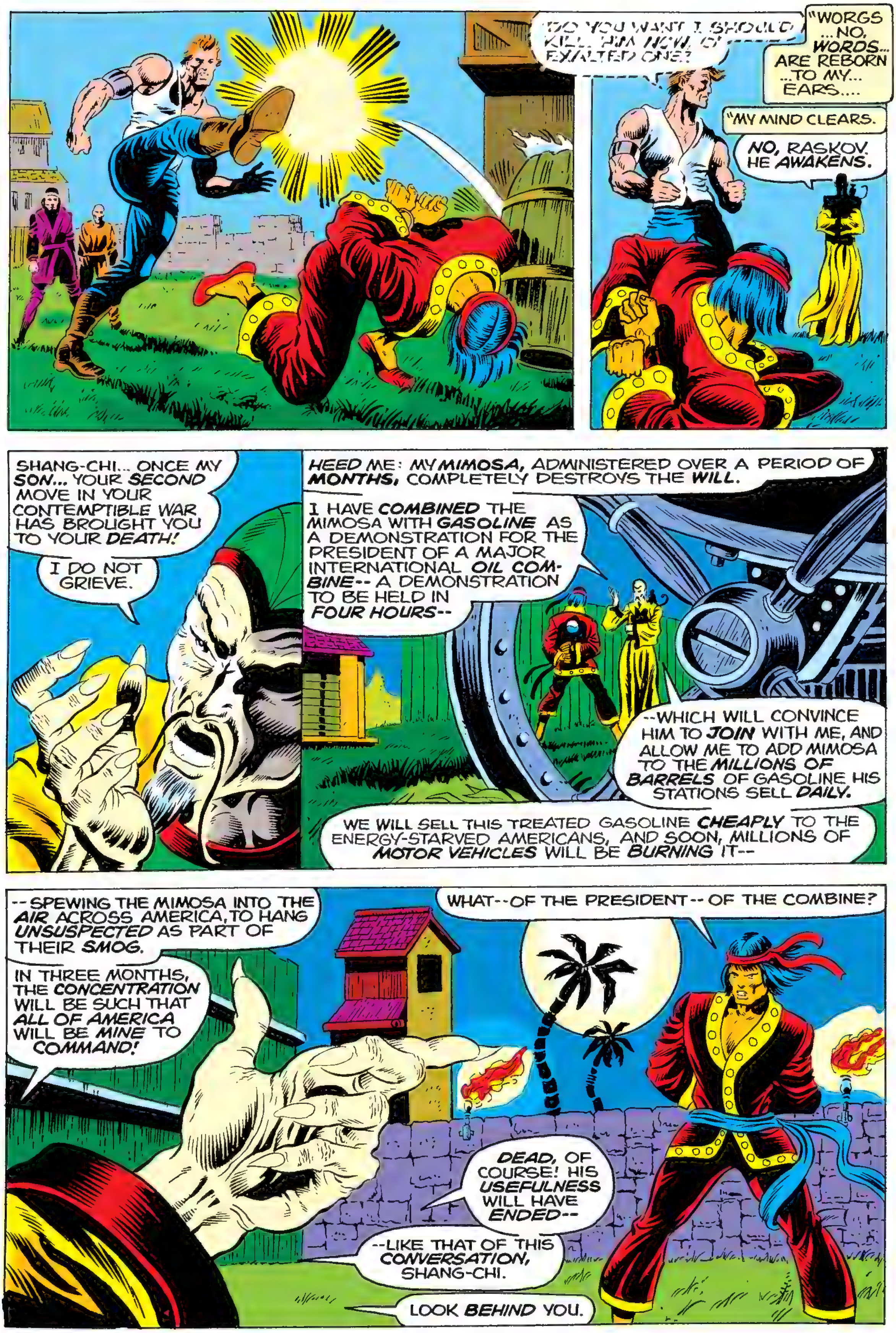

"THE *REMAINDER* OF MY JOURNEY IS *SIMILARLY* UNEVENTFUL. BY THE RISING OF A SHIMMERING, EGG-YOLK MOON, I STAND AWASH WITH DELICATELY-WARMED *SEA-BREEZES*... NOW AWAITING, PERHAPS, MY *DEATH*.
"I DID NOT *EXPECT* TO SEE MY FATHER IN *NEW YORK*... BUT I DO HERE IN THIS *COVE*.
"I WAIT.
"THE REGION NAMED *'FLORIDA'* IS *BEAUTIFUL*.
"*NEVER* HAVE I SEEN SUCH A TREE.
"AND WHAT IS *THIS?*
"OHO! A *LIZARD!*
"A *STRONG* BEAST-- YEARNING LIKE *ALL* CREATURES TO BE *FREE*.
FEAR *NOT*, LIZARD. I WISH ONLY TO *LEARN* OF YOU.
MMMM
MMMMMMMMMMMM

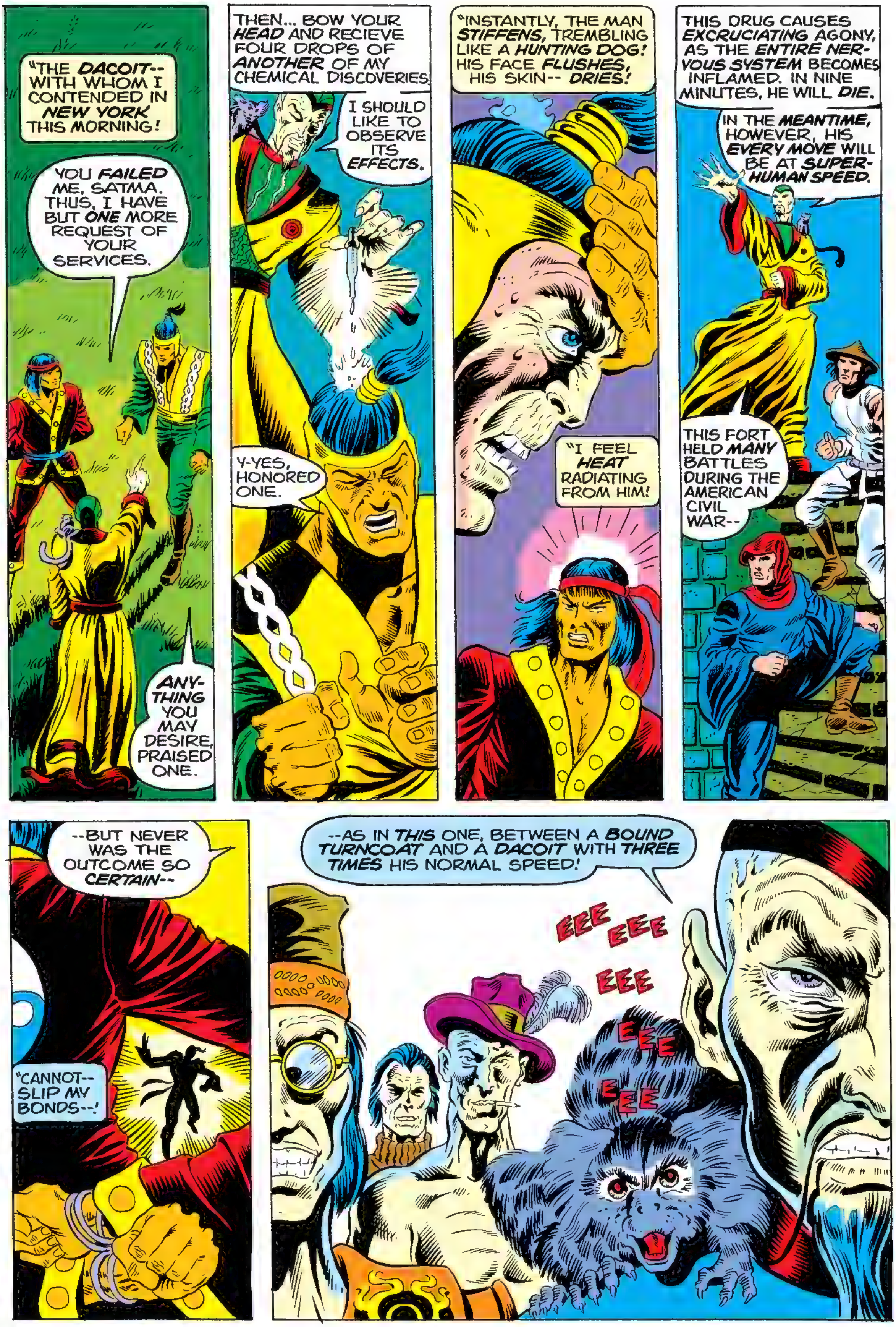

"FLEE, LITTLE LIZARD! FLEE AND FORGET THE STRANGE CREATURE WHO SEEKS TO UNDERSTAND A WORLD HE KNOWS SO LITTLE OF.
"BE THANKFUL THAT YOUR FATHER DID NOT FILL YOUR HEAD WITH LIES FROM THE DAY YOU CRAWLED FROM YOUR EGG--
"--SO THAT EVERYTHING YOU TAKE FOR GRANTED IN LIFE--EVERYTHING YOU RELY UPON IN SEEING REALITY--EVERYTHING YOU THINK TRUE--
"--IS SUSPECT!
"FLEE FROM THE STRUGGLES THAT ENSNARE SHANG-CHI--
"--AND FU MANCHU.
WHAT IS IT, PEKO?
DOES YOUR ANCIENT BRAIN DETECT MENACE?
HERE: A NUT FOR YOU.
WE HAVE BEEN TOGETHER FOR MANY YEARS, MY PET. YOUR INSTINCTS SERVE ME WELL.
YET I SEE NOTHING--AND IT IS THAT WHICH DISTURBS ME!
WHERE ARE THE TRUCKS I ORDERED?
O' CELESTIAL ONE, THIS ODIOUS PERSON PRESENTS HIMSELF FOR YOUR RIGHTEOUS WRATH!
THE VEHICLES TO TRANSPORT OUR CARGO ARE DELAYED, FOR AT LEAST TWO HOURS, BY THE NEED TO AVOID AMERICAN AUTHORITIES!
THE AMERICANS HAVE INCREASED THEIR VIGILANCE OF LATE, IN AN ATTEMPT TO DESTROY THE TRAFFIC IN DRUGS.

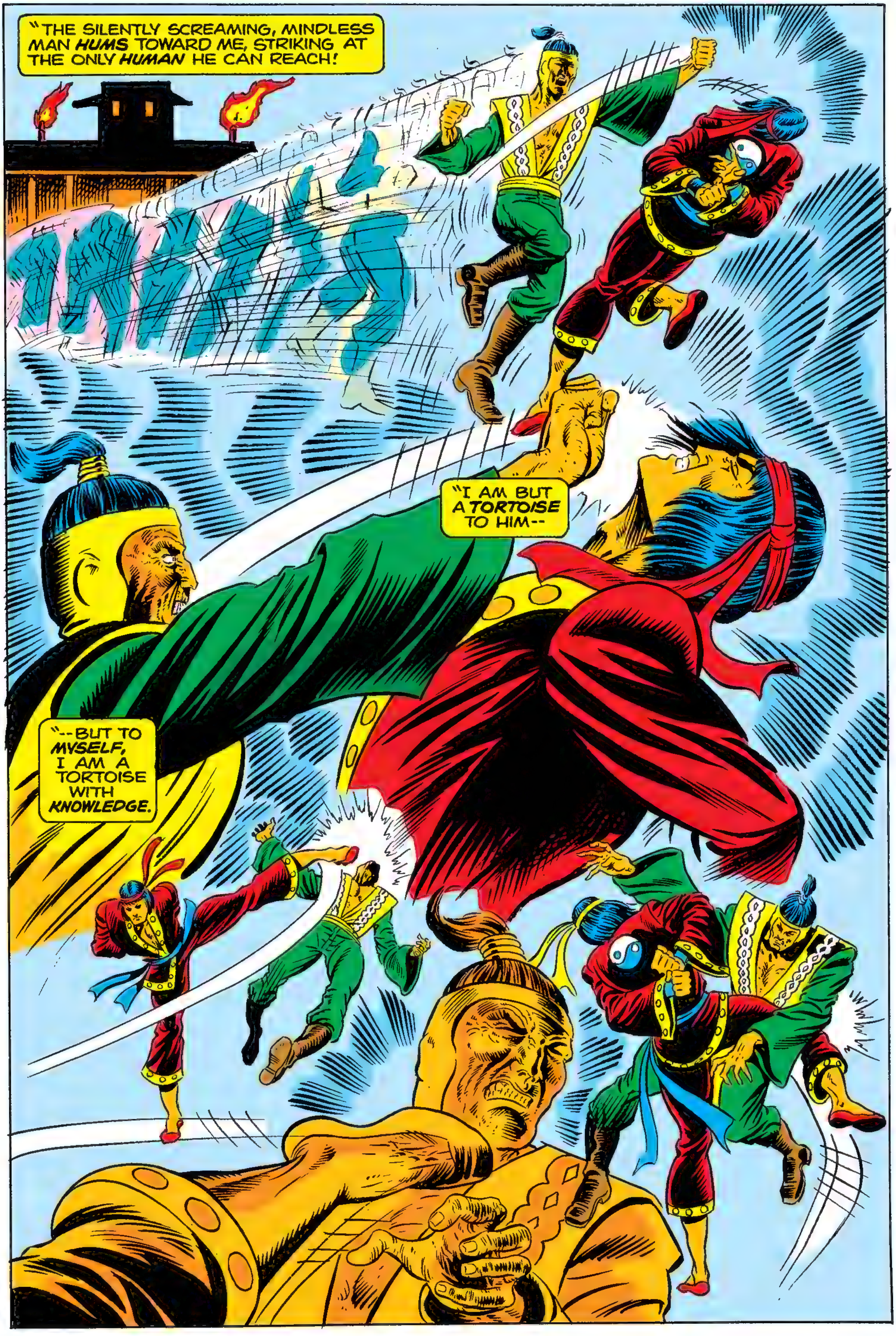

DRUGS! WHAT-- MARIJUANA? HASHISH?
IF THE FOOLS ONLY KNEW WHAT FU MANCHU IS BRINGING INTO THEIR BACKWARD LAND--!
BUT... I AM COMMITTED. I SHALL WAIT.
YOU CREWMEN! KEEP AN UNCEASING WATCH TOWARD SEA, SHORE AND SKY UNTIL OTHERWISE ORDERED!
!!
I AM NOT AT EASE!
PERHAPS IT IS FOOLISH, PEKO... BUT I CANNOT ESCAPE THE FEELING THAT SHANG-CHI IS NEARBY.
AH! YOU FEEL IT ALSO!
YET I KNOW HE WAS IN NEW YORK THIS MORNING.
WHY DOES HE PLAGUE ME SO, I WONDER. "FIRST MOVE," INDEED!
DOES HE THINK TO PLAY WITH THE MASTER OF AN EMPIRE?
HE WOULD HAVE BEEN MY RIGHT HAND--
--AND NOW HE CAN ONLY BE MY VICTIM!

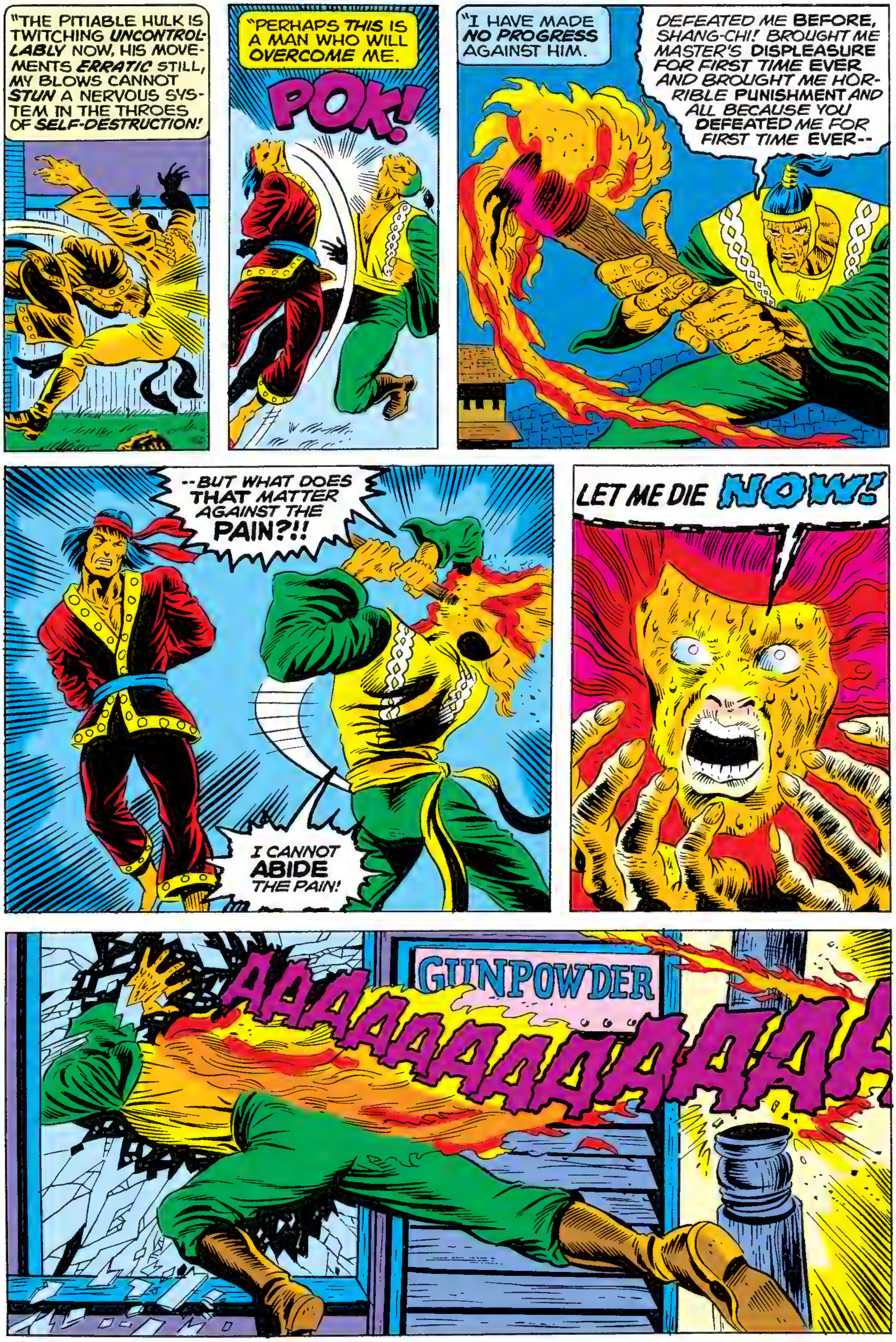

"I GLIDE PAST MY FATHER AND HIS CREW. EVERY WORD HE SPOKE IS FRESH AND CLEAR IN MY MIND, SO I SWIFTLY MAKE MY WAY TO THE CARGO HOLD.
"THE HATCH IS WELL-TENDED. IT OPENS AS SILENTLY AS THE SALT WATER EVAPORATING FROM MY GARMENTS IN THE WARM FLORIDA AIR.
"THE CARGO IS... GAS!
GAS
GAS
GAS
GAS
"I DO NOT UNDERSTAND. MY FIRST THOUGHTS ARE OF NATURAL GAS-- BUT THE UNMISTAKABLE ODOR OF GASOLINE IMMEDIATELY ENDS THEM.
"YES, THIS BARREL CONTAINS GASOLINE. YET WHY SMUGGLE IN SUCH A SUBSTANCE--
"HOLD! NOW I SMELL--
"--MIMOSA!
CLANG!
"GASOLINE FUMES--DEADENED MY NOSE--TO THE OTHER SCENT--IN THE HOLD!
"IT IS...
"...THE SCENT...
"...OF HIS...
"SEDATIVE...!
"MIND...
"...SWIRLING!
DO NOT RESIST THE MIMOSA, MY SON.
DO NOT RESIST ITS --

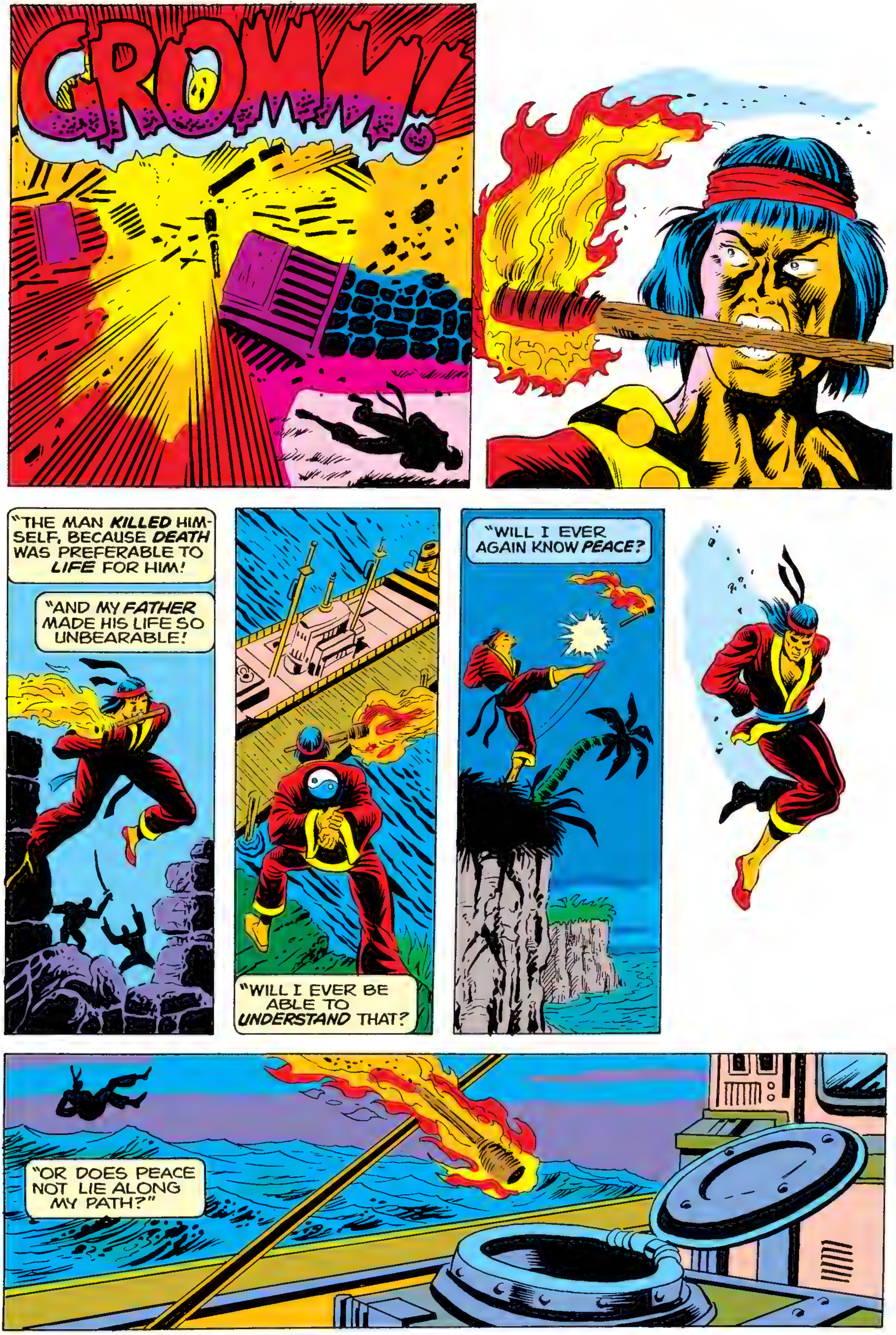
HALLUCINATIONS

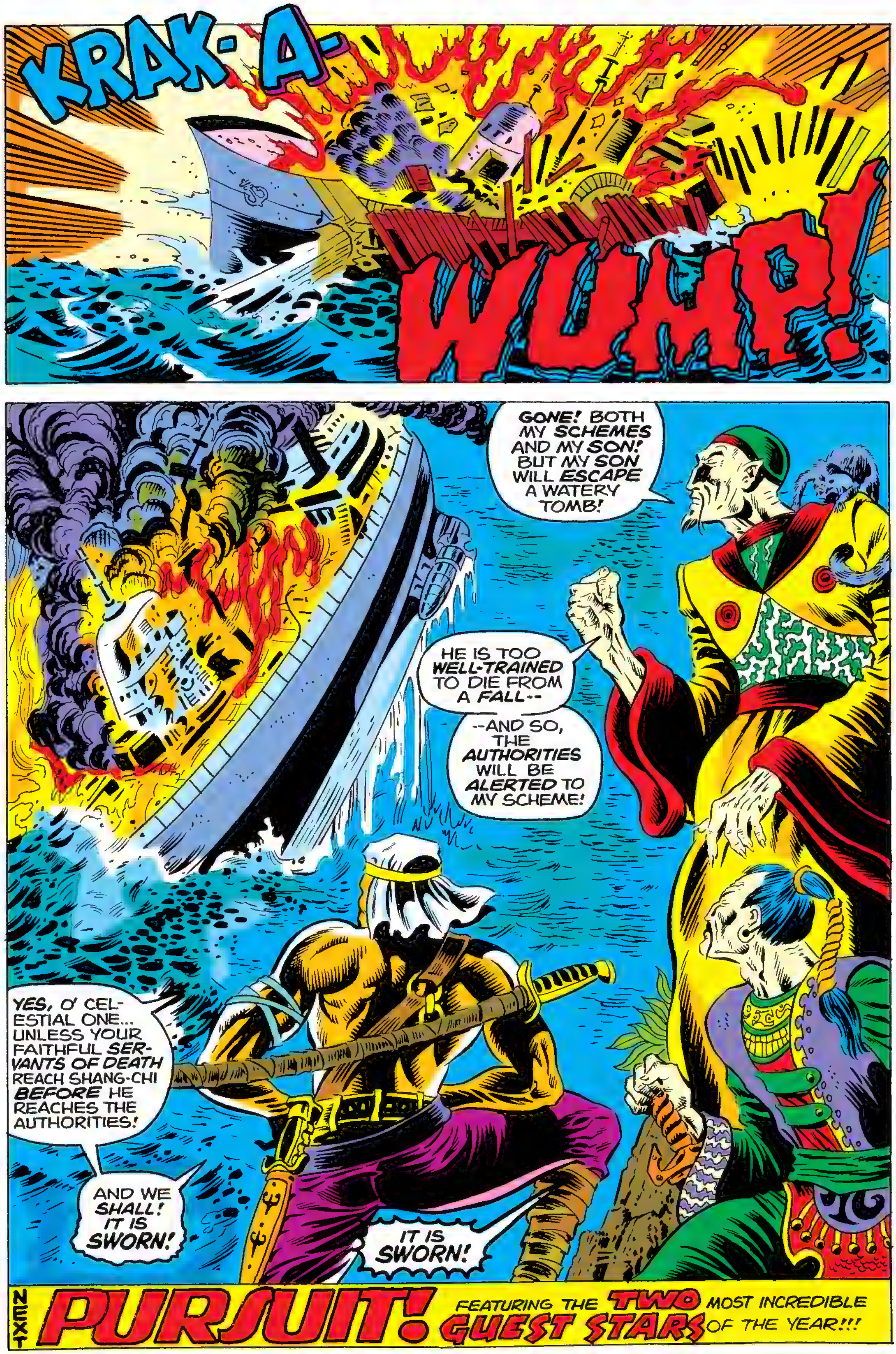

DO YOU WANT I SHOULD KILL HIM NOW, O EXALTED ONE?
"WORGS ...NO, WORDS... ARE REBORN ...TO MY... EARS....
"MY MIND CLEARS.
NO, RASKOV. HE AWAKENS.
SHANG-CHI... ONCE MY SON... YOUR SECOND MOVE IN YOUR CONTEMPTIBLE WAR HAS BROUGHT YOU TO YOUR DEATH!
I DO NOT GRIEVE.
HEED ME: MY MIMOSA, ADMINISTERED OVER A PERIOD OF MONTHS, COMPLETELY DESTROYS THE WILL.
I HAVE COMBINED THE MIMOSA WITH GASOLINE AS A DEMONSTRATION FOR THE PRESIDENT OF A MAJOR INTERNATIONAL OIL COMBINE-- A DEMONSTRATION TO BE HELD IN FOUR HOURS--
--WHICH WILL CONVINCE HIM TO JOIN WITH ME, AND ALLOW ME TO ADD MIMOSA TO THE MILLIONS OF BARRELS OF GASOLINE HIS STATIONS SELL DAILY.
WE WILL SELL THIS TREATED GASOLINE CHEAPLY TO THE ENERGY-STARVED AMERICANS, AND SOON, MILLIONS OF MOTOR VEHICLES WILL BE BURNING IT--
--SPEWING THE MIMOSA INTO THE AIR ACROSS AMERICA, TO HANG UNSUSPECTED AS PART OF THEIR SMOG.
IN THREE MONTHS, THE CONCENTRATION WILL BE SUCH THAT ALL OF AMERICA WILL BE MINE TO COMMAND!
WHAT--OF THE PRESIDENT--OF THE COMBINE?
DEAD, OF COURSE! HIS USEFULNESS WILL HAVE ENDED--
--LIKE THAT OF THIS CONVERSATION, SHANG-CHI.
LOOK BEHIND YOU.

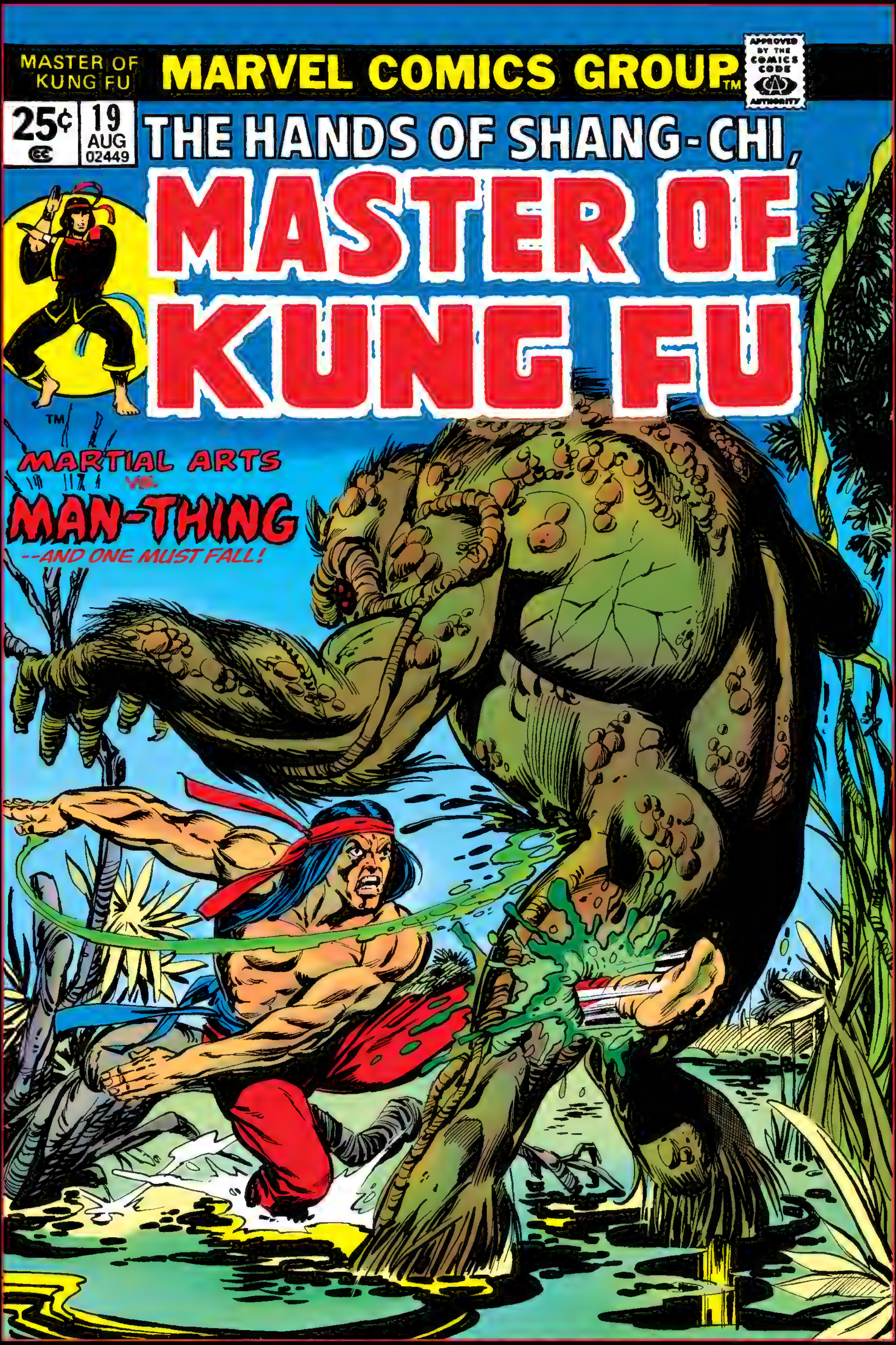

"THE DACOIT-- WITH WHOM I CONTENDED IN NEW YORK THIS MORNING!
YOU FAILED ME, SATMA. THUS, I HAVE BUT ONE MORE REQUEST OF YOUR SERVICES.
ANYTHING YOU MAY DESIRE, PRAISED ONE.
THEN... BOW YOUR HEAD AND RECIEVE FOUR DROPS OF ANOTHER OF MY CHEMICAL DISCOVERIES.
I SHOULD LIKE TO OBSERVE ITS EFFECTS.
Y-YES, HONORED ONE.
"INSTANTLY, THE MAN STIFFENS, TREMBLING LIKE A HUNTING DOG! HIS FACE FLUSHES, HIS SKIN-- DRIES!
"I FEEL HEAT RADIATING FROM HIM!
THIS DRUG CAUSES EXCRUCIATING AGONY, AS THE ENTIRE NERVOUS SYSTEM BECOMES INFLAMED. IN NINE MINUTES, HE WILL DIE.
IN THE MEANTIME, HOWEVER, HIS EVERY MOVE WILL BE AT SUPER-HUMAN SPEED.
THIS FORT HELD MANY BATTLES DURING THE AMERICAN CIVIL WAR--
--BUT NEVER WAS THE OUTCOME SO CERTAIN--
"CANNOT-- SLIP MY BONDS--!
--AS IN THIS ONE, BETWEEN A BOUND TURNCOAT AND A DACOIT WITH THREE TIMES HIS NORMAL SPEED!
EEE EEE EEE EEE EEE


"THE SILENTLY SCREAMING, MINDLESS MAN *HUMS* TOWARD ME, STRIKING AT THE ONLY *HUMAN* HE CAN REACH!
"I AM BUT A *TORTOISE* TO HIM--
"--BUT TO *MYSELF,* I AM A TORTOISE WITH *KNOWLEDGE*.


"THE PITIABLE HULK IS TWITCHING *UNCONTROLLABLY* NOW, HIS MOVEMENTS *ERRATIC* STILL, MY BLOWS CANNOT *STUN* A NERVOUS SYSTEM IN THE THROES OF *SELF-DESTRUCTION!*
"PERHAPS *THIS* IS A MAN WHO WILL *OVERCOME* ME.
POK!
"I HAVE MADE *NO PROGRESS* AGAINST HIM.
DEFEATED ME BEFORE, SHANG-CHI! BROUGHT ME MASTER'S DISPLEASURE FOR FIRST TIME EVER AND BROUGHT ME HORRIBLE PUNISHMENT AND ALL BECAUSE YOU DEFEATED ME FOR FIRST TIME EVER--
--BUT WHAT DOES THAT MATTER AGAINST THE PAIN?!!
I CANNOT ABIDE THE PAIN!
LET ME DIE NOW!
GUNPOWDER
AAAAAAAAAAAAAAH


CROMM!
"THE MAN KILLED HIMSELF, BECAUSE DEATH WAS PREFERABLE TO LIFE FOR HIM!
"AND MY FATHER MADE HIS LIFE SO UNBEARABLE!
"WILL I EVER BE ABLE TO UNDERSTAND THAT?
"WILL I EVER AGAIN KNOW PEACE?
"OR DOES PEACE NOT LIE ALONG MY PATH?"


KRAK-A-
WUMP!
GONE! BOTH MY SCHEMES AND MY SON! BUT MY SON WILL ESCAPE A WATERY TOMB!
HE IS TOO WELL-TRAINED TO DIE FROM A FALL--
--AND SO, THE AUTHORITIES WILL BE ALERTED TO MY SCHEME!
YES, O' CELESTIAL ONE... UNLESS YOUR FAITHFUL SERVANTS OF DEATH REACH SHANG-CHI BEFORE HE REACHES THE AUTHORITIES!
AND WE SHALL! IT IS SWORN!
IT IS SWORN!
NEXT PURSUIT! FEATURING THE TWO MOST INCREDIBLE GUEST STARS OF THE YEAR!!!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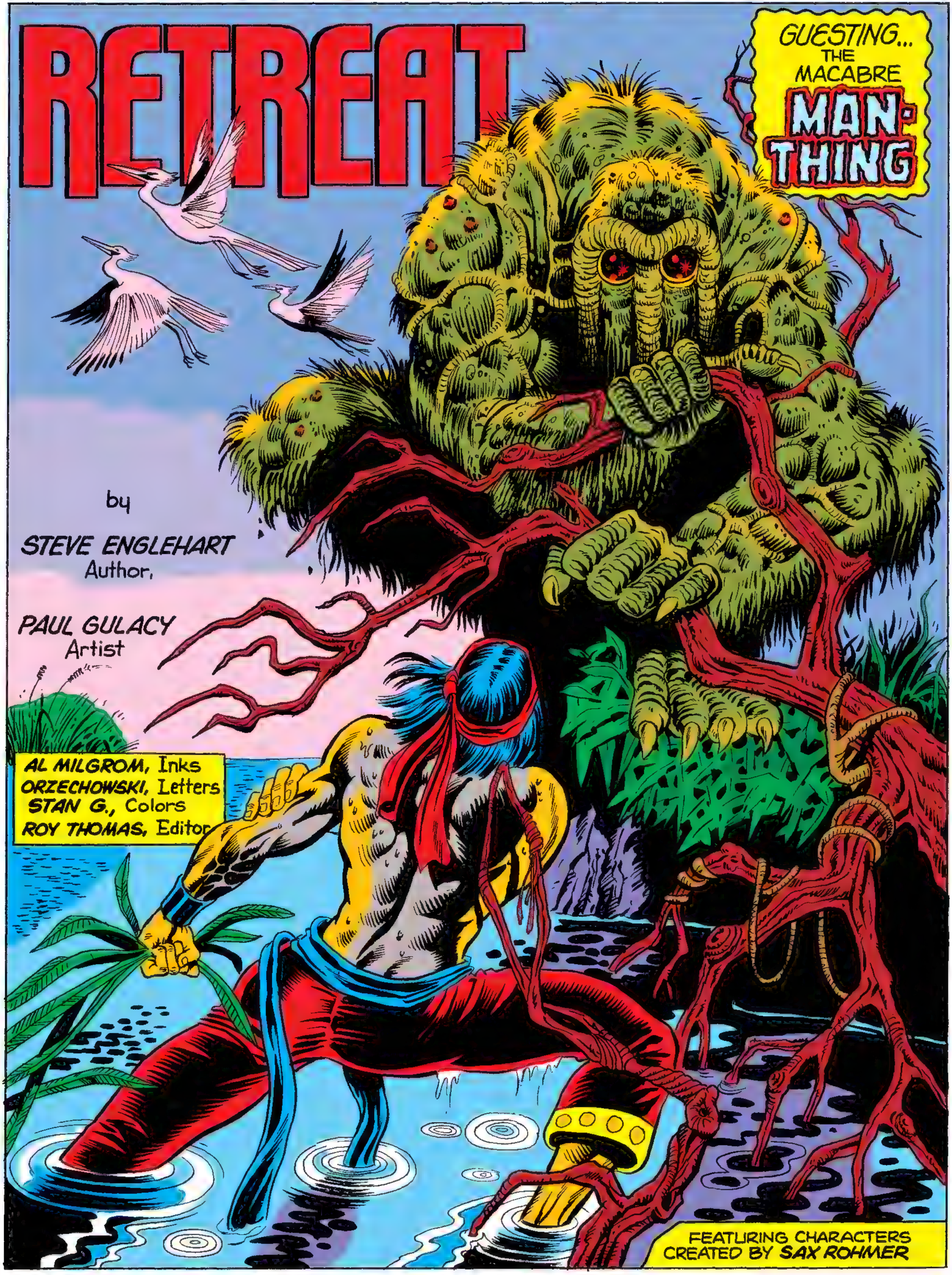
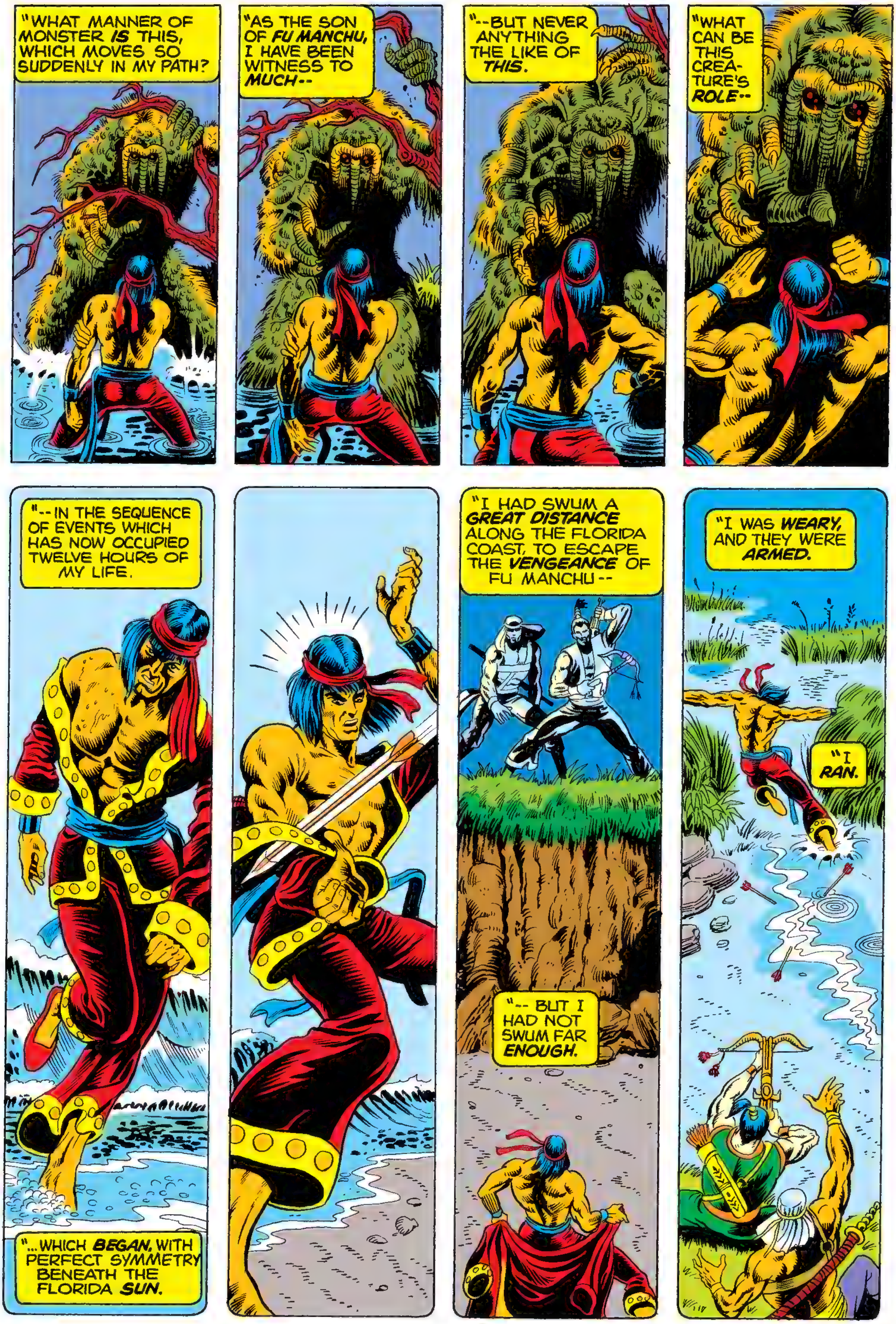
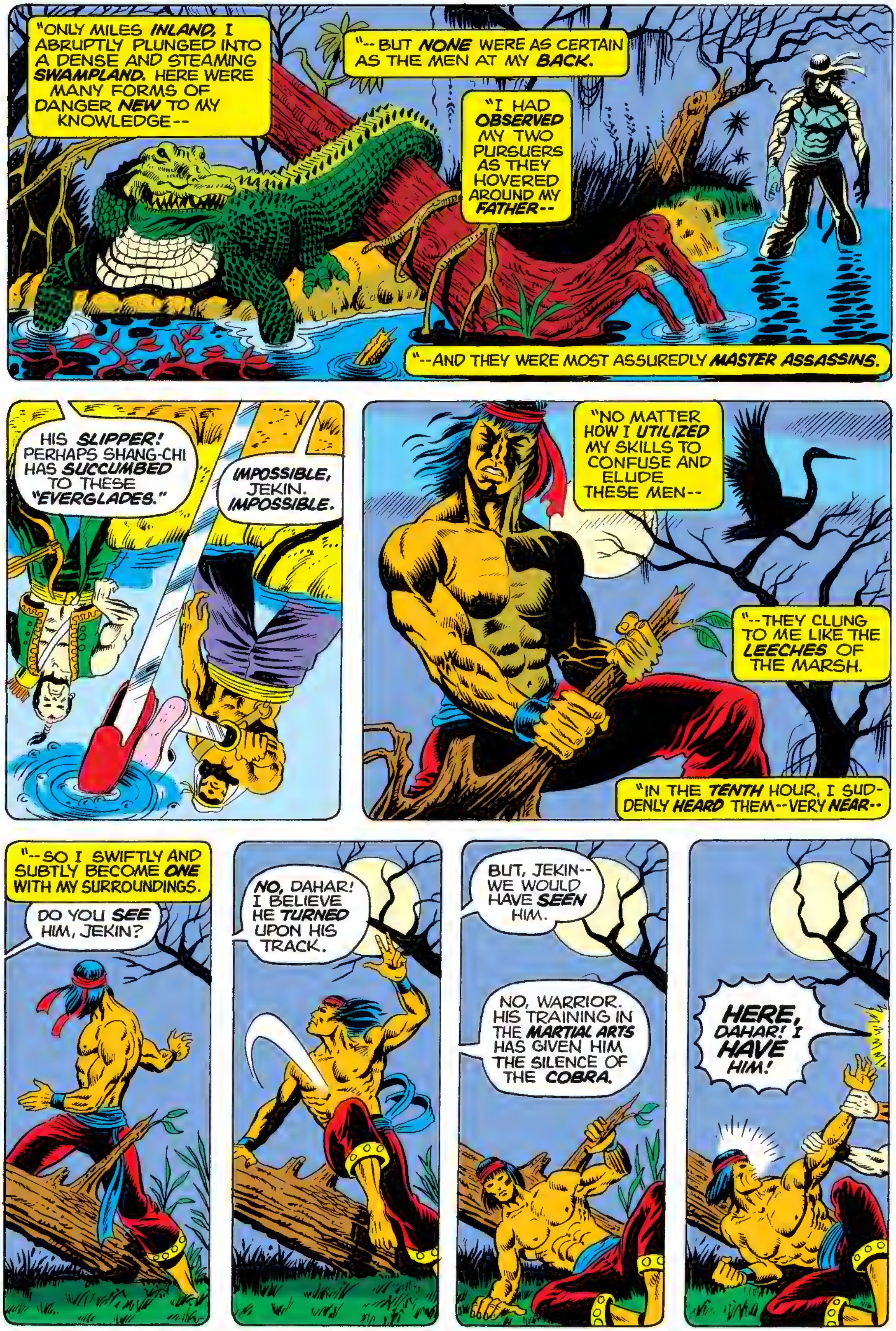
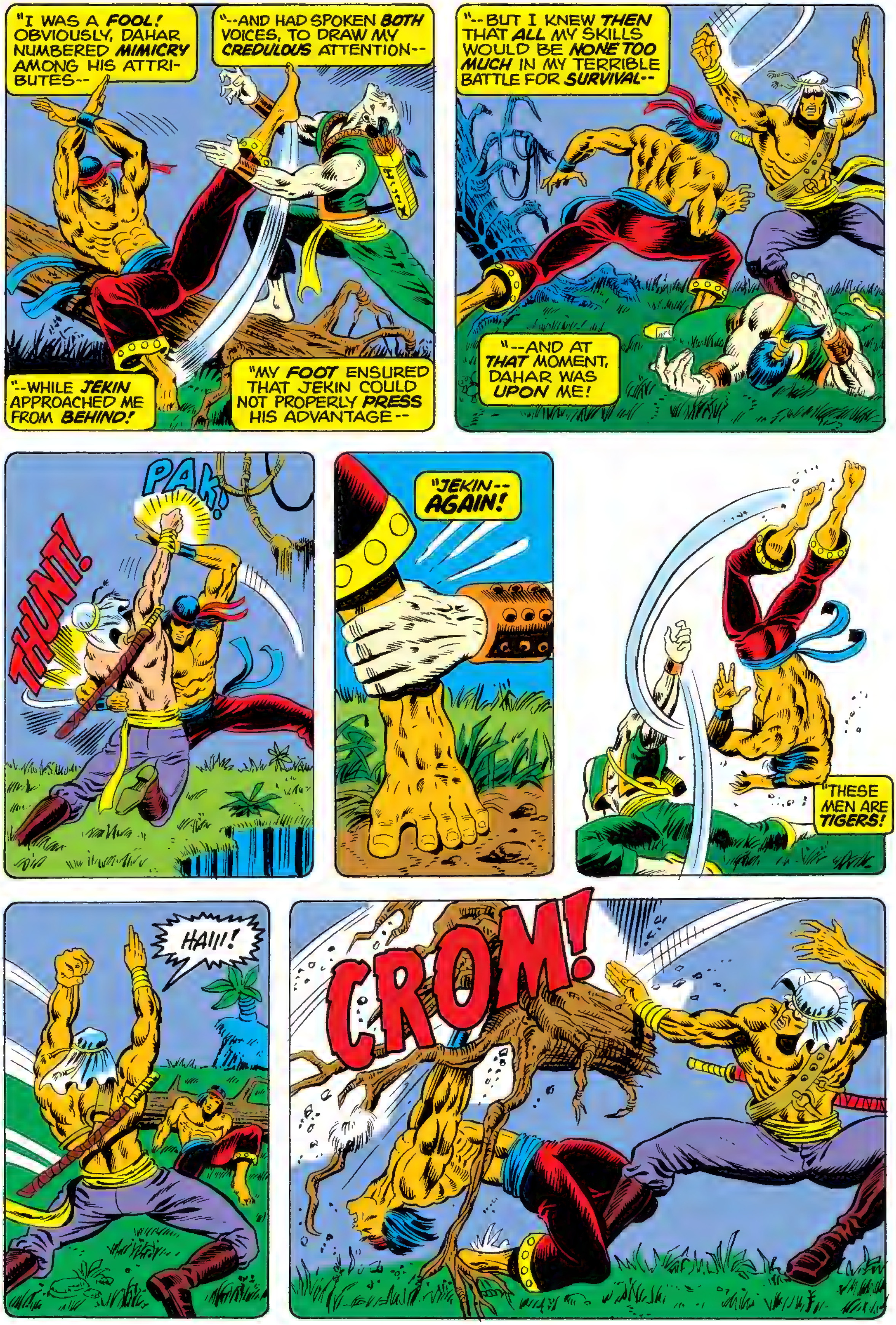
THE HANDS OF SHANG-CHI,
MASTER OF KUNG FU
™
MARTIAL ARTS vs. MAN-THING
--AND ONE MUST FALL!

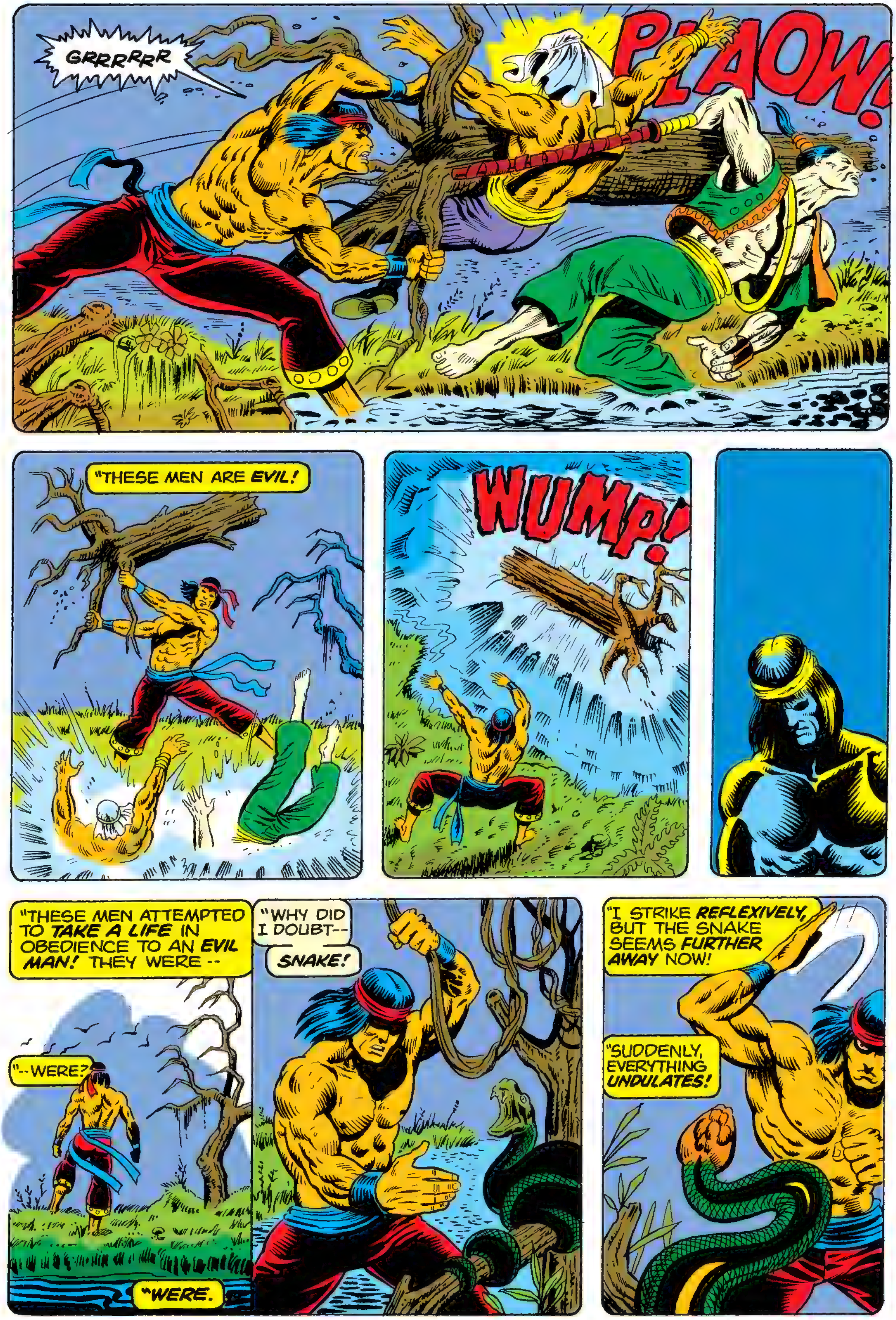
Stan Lee PRESENTS: MASTER OF KUNG FU!™

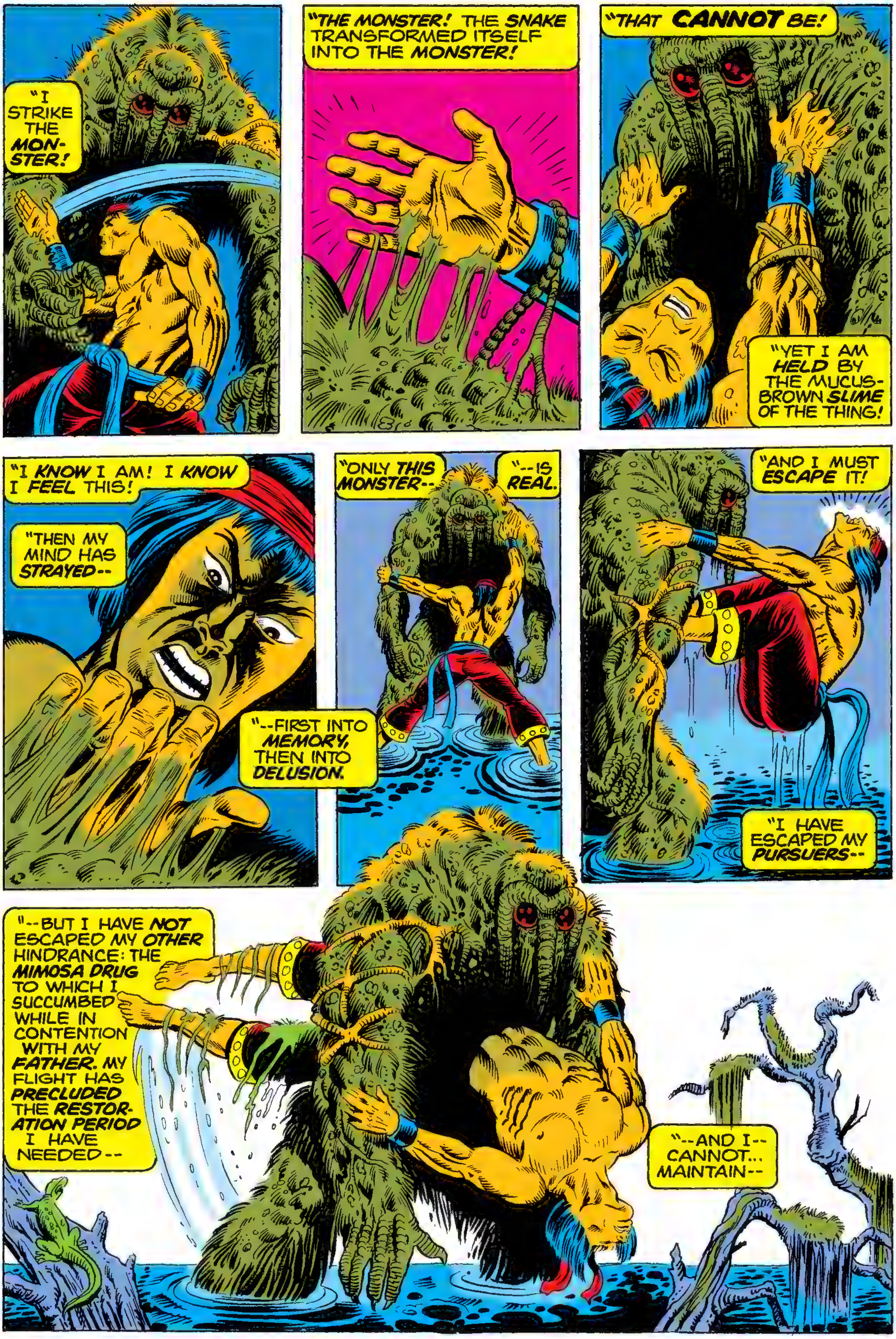

RETREAT
GUESTING... THE MACABRE MAN-THING
by
STEVE ENGLEHART Author,
PAUL GULACY Artist
AL MILGROM, Inks
ORZECHOWSKI, Letters
STAN G., Colors
ROY THOMAS, Editor
FEATURING CHARACTERS CREATED BY SAX ROHMER

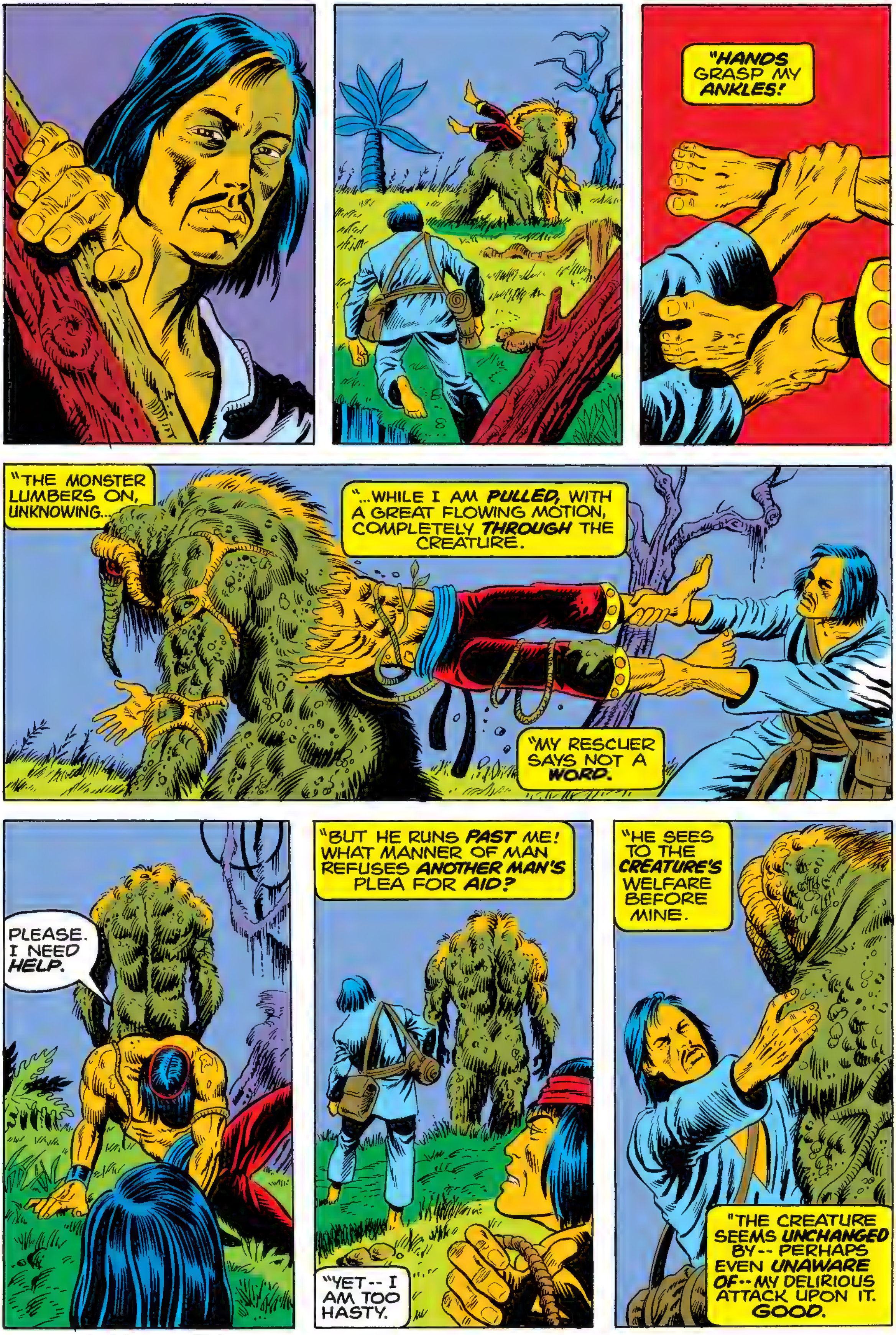

"WHAT MANNER OF MONSTER *IS* THIS, WHICH MOVES SO SUDDENLY IN MY PATH?
"AS THE SON OF *FU MANCHU*, I HAVE BEEN WITNESS TO *MUCH*--
"--BUT NEVER ANYTHING THE LIKE OF *THIS*.
"WHAT CAN BE THIS CREATURE'S *ROLE*--
"--IN THE SEQUENCE OF EVENTS WHICH HAS NOW OCCUPIED TWELVE HOURS OF MY LIFE.
"...WHICH *BEGAN*, WITH PERFECT SYMMETRY BENEATH THE FLORIDA *SUN*.
"I HAD SWUM A *GREAT DISTANCE* ALONG THE FLORIDA COAST, TO ESCAPE THE *VENGEANCE* OF FU MANCHU--
"-- BUT I HAD NOT SWUM FAR *ENOUGH*.
"I WAS *WEARY*, AND THEY WERE *ARMED*.
"I *RAN*.

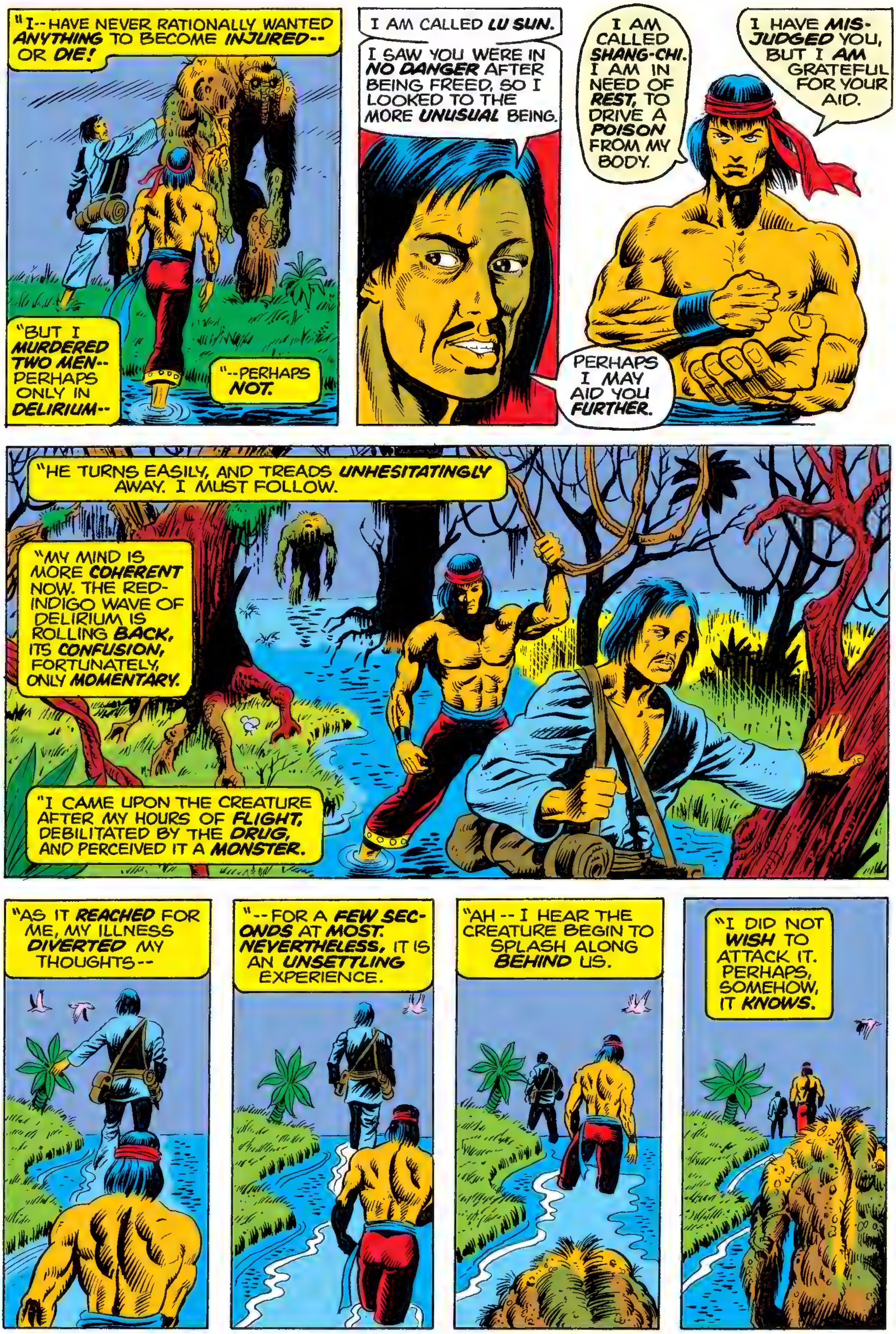

"ONLY MILES INLAND, I ABRUPTLY PLUNGED INTO A DENSE AND STEAMING SWAMPLAND. HERE WERE MANY FORMS OF DANGER NEW TO MY KNOWLEDGE--
"-- BUT NONE WERE AS CERTAIN AS THE MEN AT MY BACK.
"I HAD OBSERVED MY TWO PURSUERS AS THEY HOVERED AROUND MY FATHER--
"--AND THEY WERE MOST ASSUREDLY MASTER ASSASSINS.
HIS SLIPPER! PERHAPS SHANG-CHI HAS SUCCUMBED TO THESE "EVERGLADES."
IMPOSSIBLE, JEKIN. IMPOSSIBLE.
"NO MATTER HOW I UTILIZED MY SKILLS TO CONFUSE AND ELUDE THESE MEN--
"--THEY CLUNG TO ME LIKE THE LEECHES OF THE MARSH.
"IN THE TENTH HOUR, I SUDDENLY HEARD THEM--VERY NEAR--
"--SO I SWIFTLY AND SUBTLY BECOME ONE WITH MY SURROUNDINGS.
DO YOU SEE HIM, JEKIN?
NO, DAHAR! I BELIEVE HE TURNED UPON HIS TRACK.
BUT, JEKIN-- WE WOULD HAVE SEEN HIM.
NO, WARRIOR. HIS TRAINING IN THE MARTIAL ARTS HAS GIVEN HIM THE SILENCE OF THE COBRA.
HERE, DAHAR! I HAVE HIM!

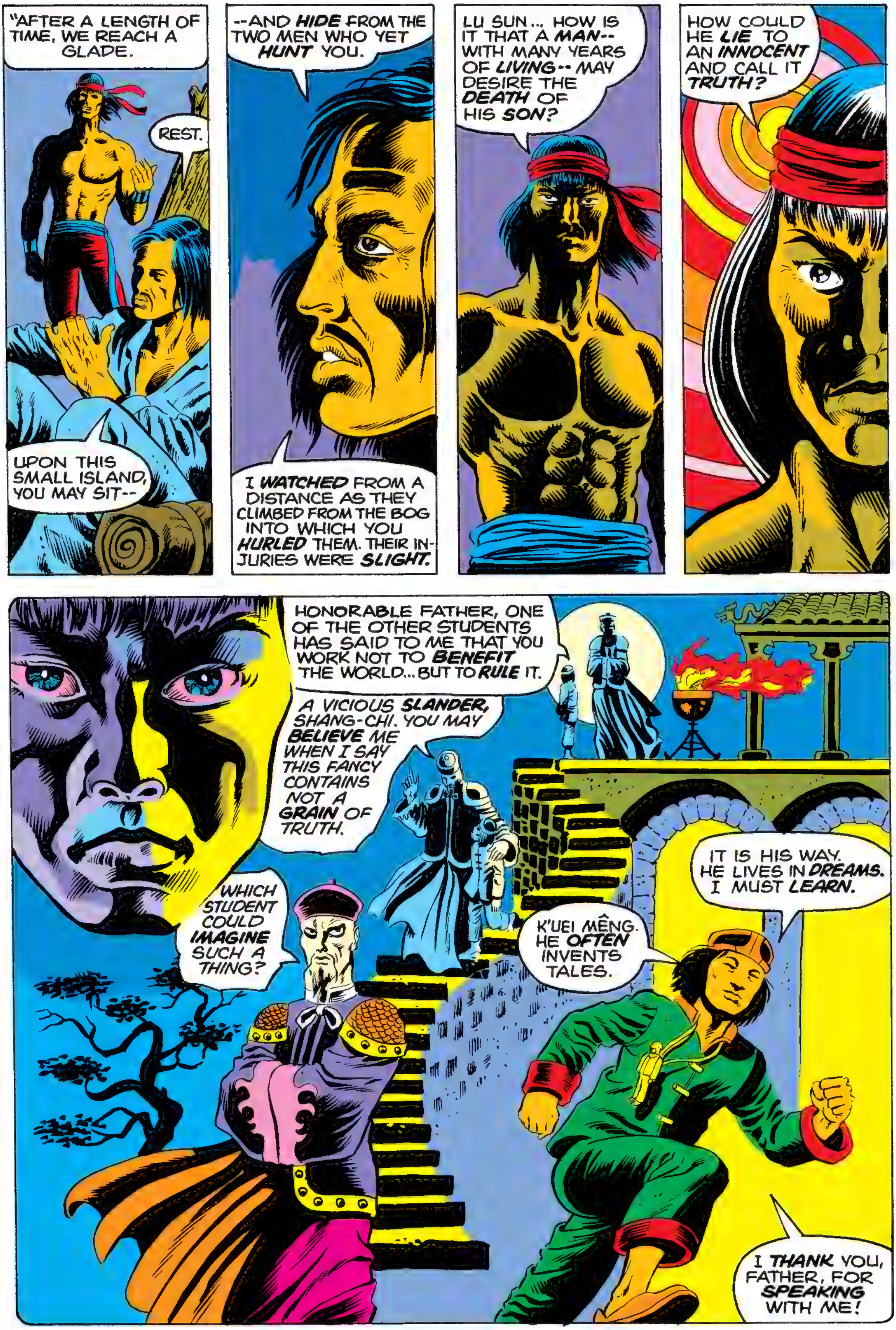

"I WAS A FOOL! OBVIOUSLY, DAHAR NUMBERED MIMICRY AMONG HIS ATTRIBUTES--
"--AND HAD SPOKEN BOTH VOICES, TO DRAW MY CREDULOUS ATTENTION--
"--WHILE JEKIN APPROACHED ME FROM BEHIND!
"MY FOOT ENSURED THAT JEKIN COULD NOT PROPERLY PRESS HIS ADVANTAGE--
"--BUT I KNEW THEN THAT ALL MY SKILLS WOULD BE NONE TOO MUCH IN MY TERRIBLE BATTLE FOR SURVIVAL--
"--AND AT THAT MOMENT, DAHAR WAS UPON ME!
PAK!
THUNT!
"JEKIN-- AGAIN!
"THESE MEN ARE TIGERS!
HAIII!
CROM!

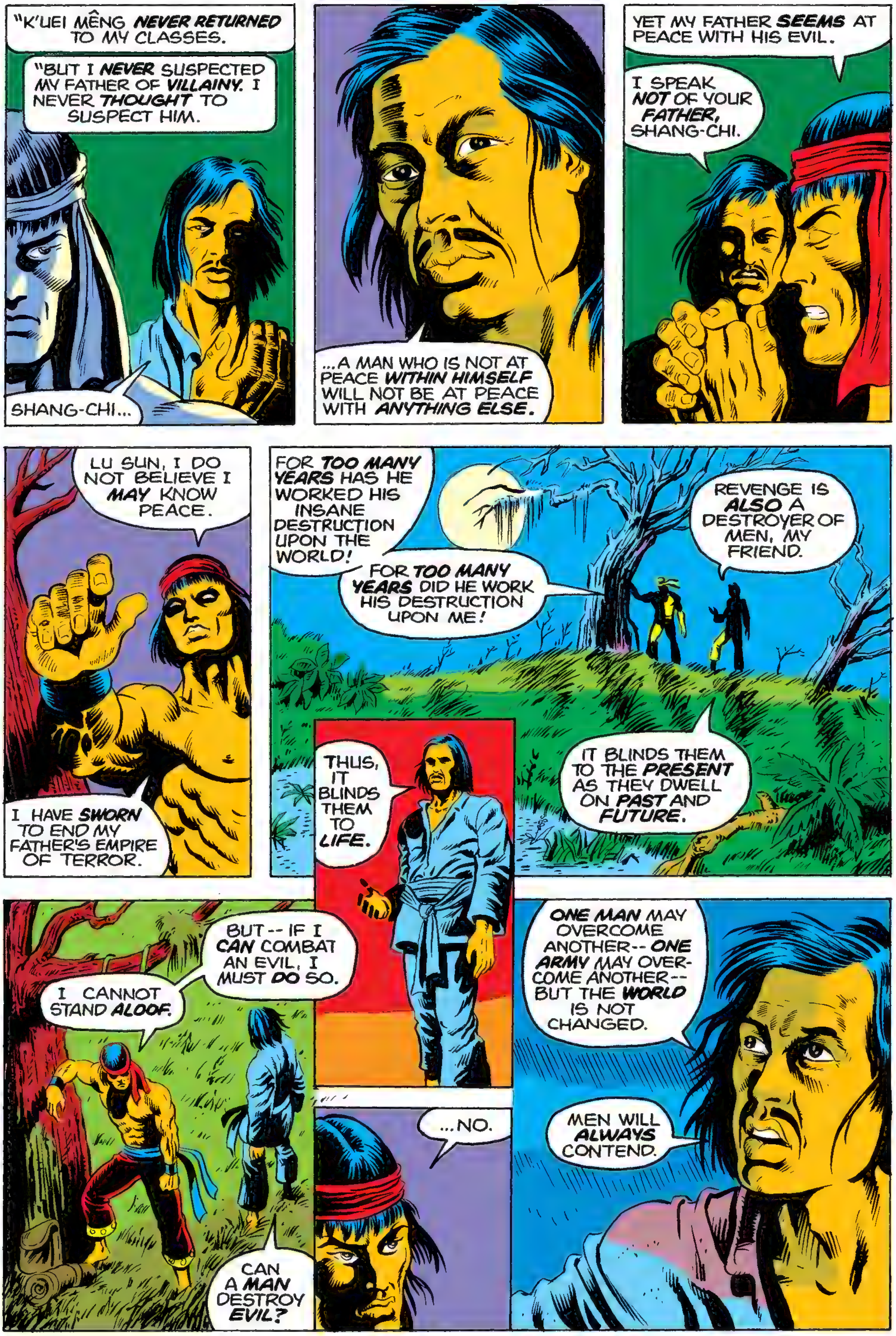

GRRRRRR
PLAOW!
"THESE MEN ARE EVIL!
WUMP!
"THESE MEN ATTEMPTED TO TAKE A LIFE IN OBEDIENCE TO AN EVIL MAN! THEY WERE --
"--WERE?
"WERE.
"WHY DID I DOUBT--
SNAKE!
"I STRIKE REFLEXIVELY, BUT THE SNAKE SEEMS FURTHER AWAY NOW!
"SUDDENLY, EVERYTHING UNDULATES!

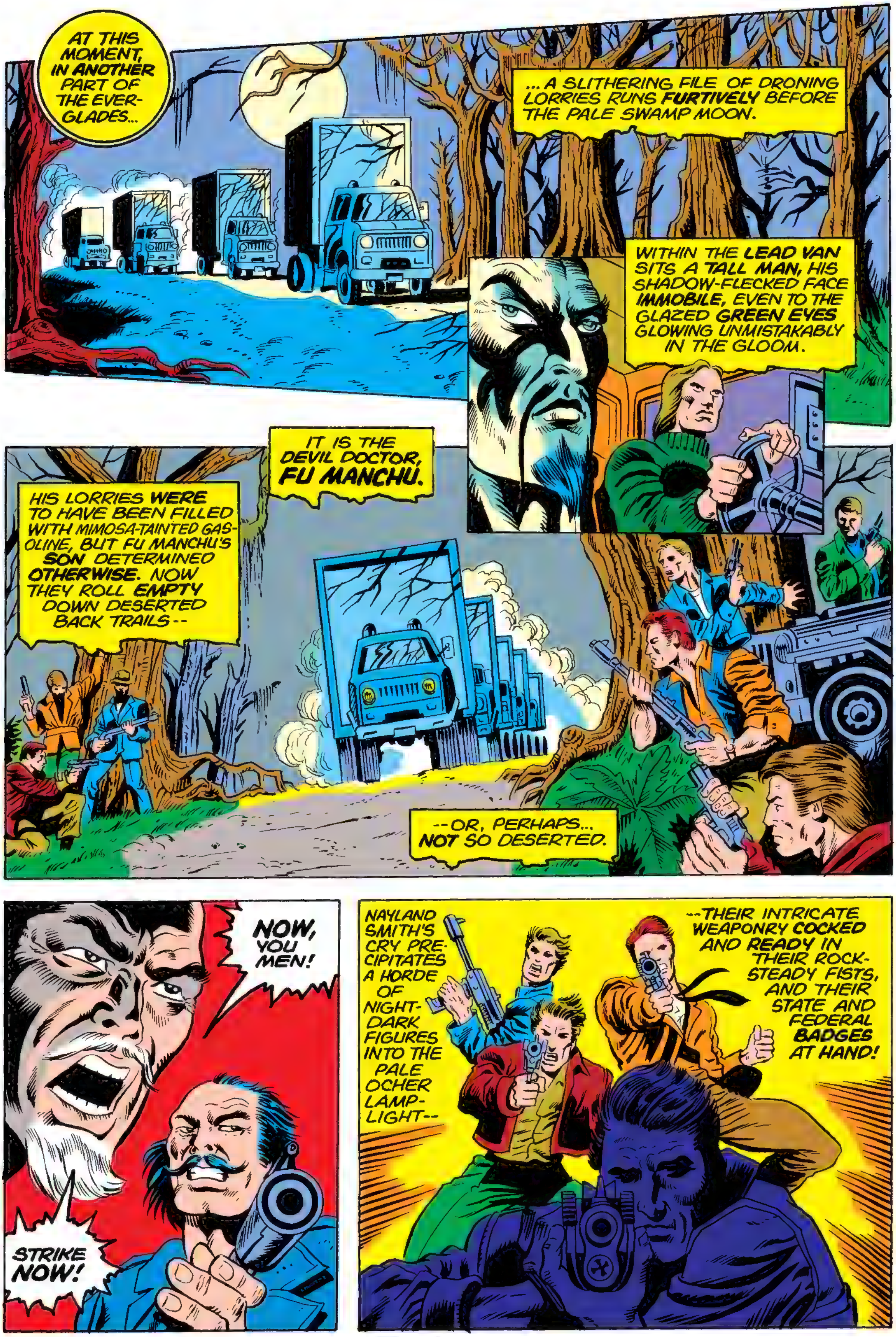

"I STRIKE THE MONSTER!
"THE MONSTER! THE SNAKE TRANSFORMED ITSELF INTO THE MONSTER!
"THAT CANNOT BE!
"YET I AM HELD BY THE MUCUS-BROWN SLIME OF THE THING!
"I KNOW I AM! I KNOW I FEEL THIS!
"THEN MY MIND HAS STRAYED--
"--FIRST INTO MEMORY, THEN INTO DELUSION.
"ONLY THIS MONSTER--
"--IS REAL.
"AND I MUST ESCAPE IT!
"I HAVE ESCAPED MY PURSUERS--
"--BUT I HAVE NOT ESCAPED MY OTHER HINDRANCE: THE MIMOSA DRUG TO WHICH I SUCCUMBED WHILE IN CONTENTION WITH MY FATHER. MY FLIGHT HAS PRECLUDED THE RESTORATION PERIOD I HAVE NEEDED--
"--AND I--CANNOT... MAINTAIN--

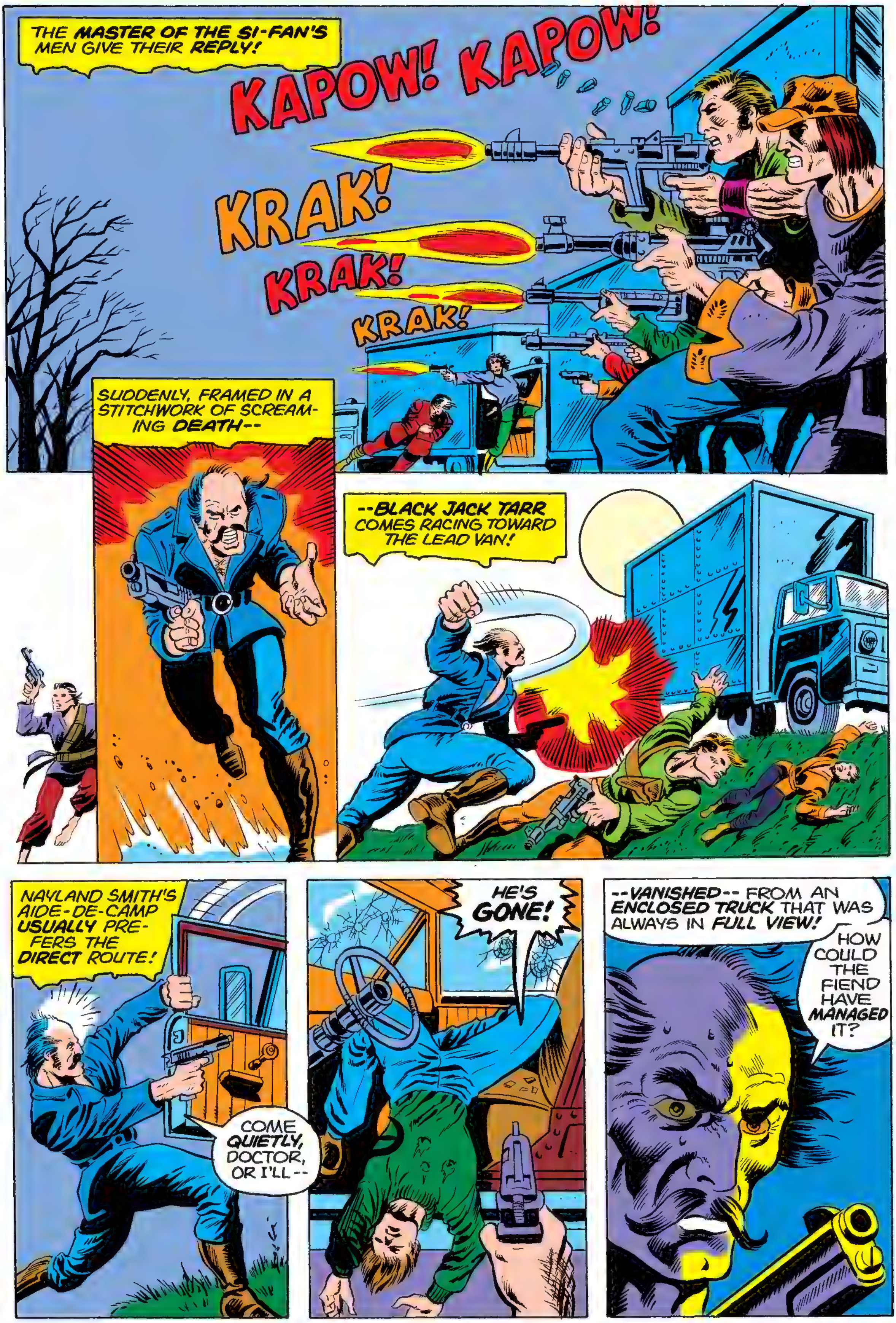

"HANDS GRASP MY ANKLES!
"THE MONSTER LUMBERS ON, UNKNOWING...
"...WHILE I AM PULLED, WITH A GREAT FLOWING MOTION, COMPLETELY THROUGH THE CREATURE.
"MY RESCUER SAYS NOT A WORD.
PLEASE. I NEED HELP.
"BUT HE RUNS PAST ME! WHAT MANNER OF MAN REFUSES ANOTHER MAN'S PLEA FOR AID?
"YET -- I AM TOO HASTY.
"HE SEES TO THE CREATURE'S WELFARE BEFORE MINE.
"THE CREATURE SEEMS UNCHANGED BY -- PERHAPS EVEN UNAWARE OF -- MY DELIRIOUS ATTACK UPON IT. GOOD.

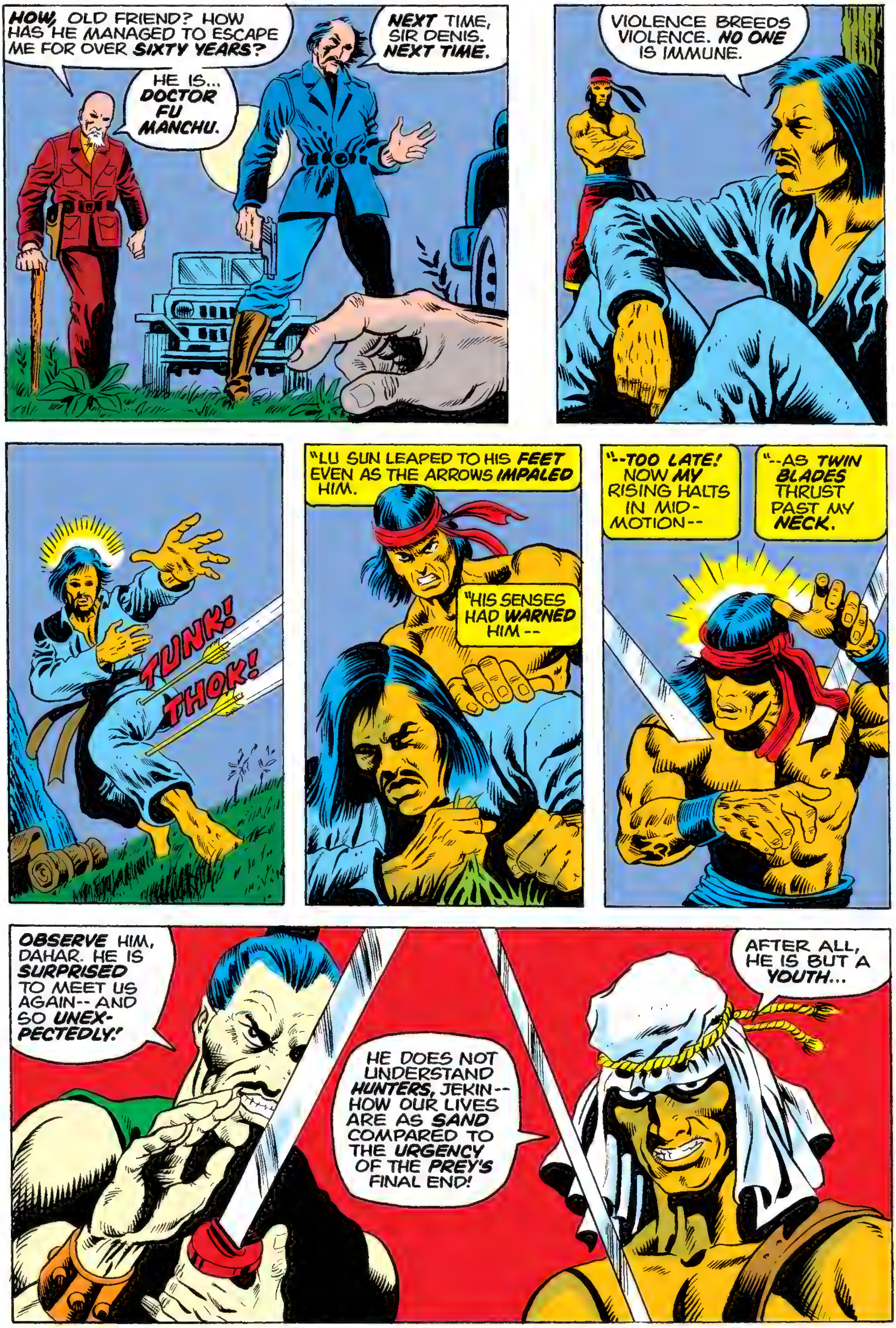

"I--HAVE NEVER RATIONALLY WANTED ANYTHING TO BECOME INJURED--OR DIE!
"BUT I MURDERED TWO MEN--PERHAPS ONLY IN DELIRIUM--
"--PERHAPS NOT.
I AM CALLED LU SUN.
I SAW YOU WERE IN NO DANGER AFTER BEING FREED, SO I LOOKED TO THE MORE UNUSUAL BEING.
I AM CALLED SHANG-CHI. I AM IN NEED OF REST, TO DRIVE A POISON FROM MY BODY.
PERHAPS I MAY AID YOU FURTHER.
I HAVE MISJUDGED YOU, BUT I AM GRATEFUL FOR YOUR AID.
"HE TURNS EASILY, AND TREADS UNHESITATINGLY AWAY. I MUST FOLLOW.
"MY MIND IS MORE COHERENT NOW. THE RED-INDIGO WAVE OF DELIRIUM IS ROLLING BACK, ITS CONFUSION, FORTUNATELY, ONLY MOMENTARY.
"I CAME UPON THE CREATURE AFTER MY HOURS OF FLIGHT, DEBILITATED BY THE DRUG, AND PERCEIVED IT A MONSTER.
"AS IT REACHED FOR ME, MY ILLNESS DIVERTED MY THOUGHTS--
"--FOR A FEW SECONDS AT MOST. NEVERTHELESS, IT IS AN UNSETTLING EXPERIENCE.
"AH -- I HEAR THE CREATURE BEGIN TO SPLASH ALONG BEHIND US.
"I DID NOT WISH TO ATTACK IT. PERHAPS, SOMEHOW, IT KNOWS.

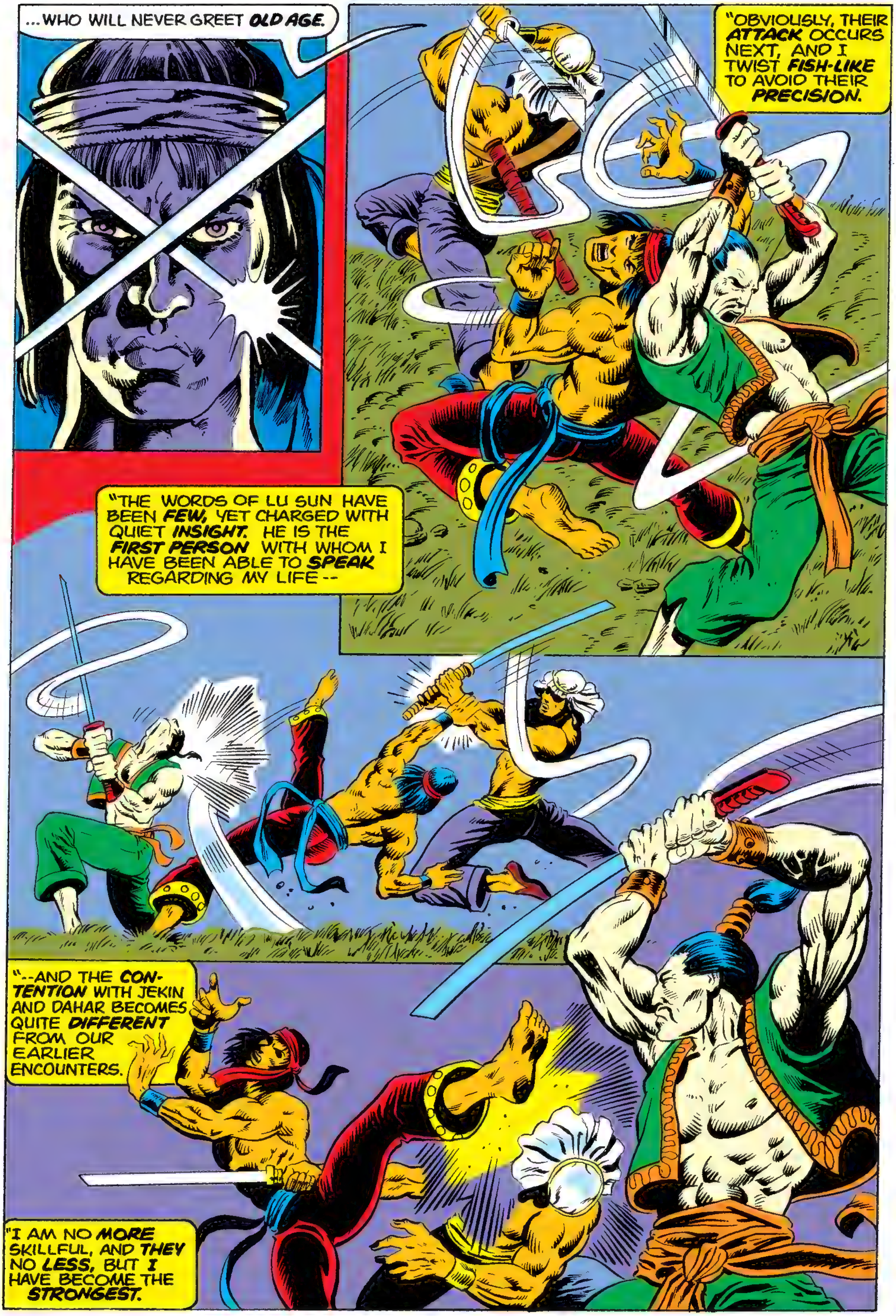

"AFTER A LENGTH OF TIME, WE REACH A GLADE.
REST.
UPON THIS SMALL ISLAND, YOU MAY SIT--
--AND HIDE FROM THE TWO MEN WHO YET HUNT YOU.
I WATCHED FROM A DISTANCE AS THEY CLIMBED FROM THE BOG INTO WHICH YOU HURLED THEM. THEIR INJURIES WERE SLIGHT.
LU SUN... HOW IS IT THAT A MAN-- WITH MANY YEARS OF LIVING-- MAY DESIRE THE DEATH OF HIS SON?
HOW COULD HE LIE TO AN INNOCENT AND CALL IT TRUTH?
HONORABLE FATHER, ONE OF THE OTHER STUDENTS HAS SAID TO ME THAT YOU WORK NOT TO BENEFIT THE WORLD... BUT TO RULE IT.
A VICIOUS SLANDER, SHANG-CHI. YOU MAY BELIEVE ME WHEN I SAY THIS FANCY CONTAINS NOT A GRAIN OF TRUTH.
WHICH STUDENT COULD IMAGINE SUCH A THING?
K'UEI MÊNG. HE OFTEN INVENTS TALES.
IT IS HIS WAY. HE LIVES IN DREAMS. I MUST LEARN.
I THANK YOU, FATHER, FOR SPEAKING WITH ME!

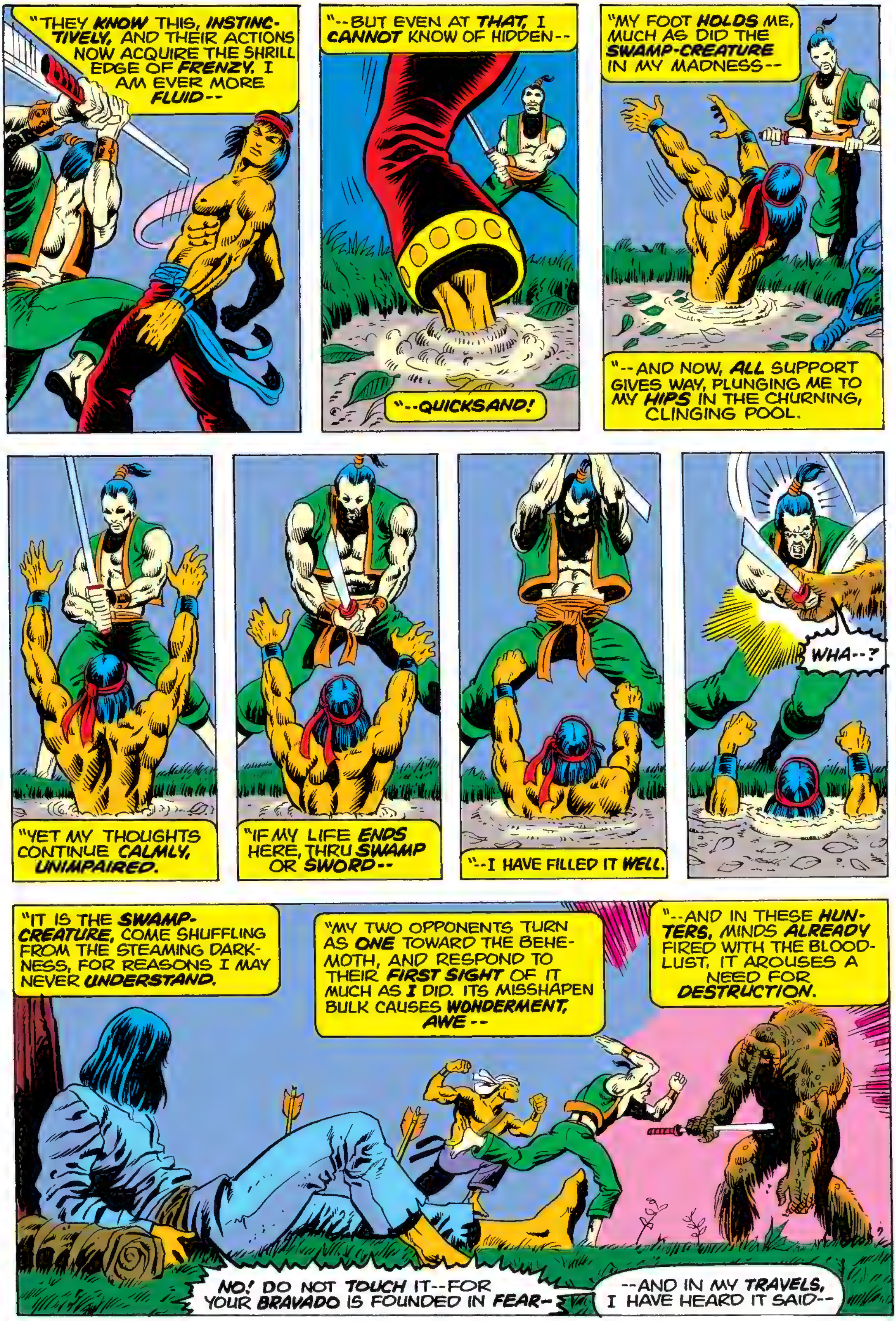

"K'UEI MÊNG NEVER RETURNED TO MY CLASSES.
"BUT I NEVER SUSPECTED MY FATHER OF VILLAINY. I NEVER THOUGHT TO SUSPECT HIM.
SHANG-CHI...
...A MAN WHO IS NOT AT PEACE WITHIN HIMSELF WILL NOT BE AT PEACE WITH ANYTHING ELSE.
YET MY FATHER SEEMS AT PEACE WITH HIS EVIL.
I SPEAK NOT OF YOUR FATHER, SHANG-CHI.
LU SUN, I DO NOT BELIEVE I MAY KNOW PEACE.
I HAVE SWORN TO END MY FATHER'S EMPIRE OF TERROR.
FOR TOO MANY YEARS HAS HE WORKED HIS INSANE DESTRUCTION UPON THE WORLD!
FOR TOO MANY YEARS DID HE WORK HIS DESTRUCTION UPON ME!
REVENGE IS ALSO A DESTROYER OF MEN, MY FRIEND.
IT BLINDS THEM TO THE PRESENT AS THEY DWELL ON PAST AND FUTURE.
THUS, IT BLINDS THEM TO LIFE.
I CANNOT STAND ALOOF.
BUT -- IF I CAN COMBAT AN EVIL, I MUST DO SO.
CAN A MAN DESTROY EVIL?
...NO.
ONE MAN MAY OVERCOME ANOTHER -- ONE ARMY MAY OVERCOME ANOTHER -- BUT THE WORLD IS NOT CHANGED.
MEN WILL ALWAYS CONTEND.

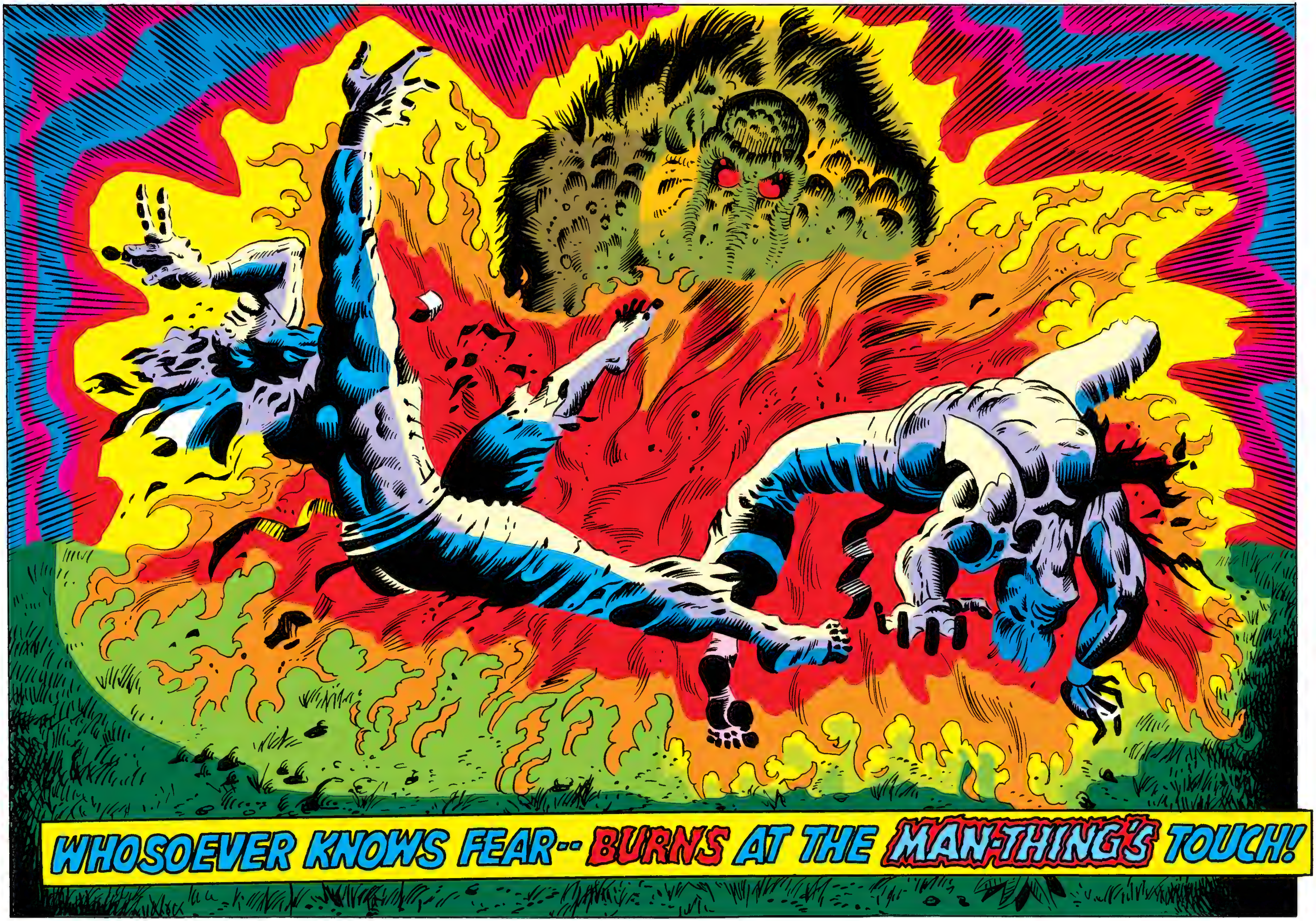

AT THIS MOMENT, IN ANOTHER PART OF THE EVERGLADES...
... A SLITHERING FILE OF DRONING LORRIES RUNS FURTIVELY BEFORE THE PALE SWAMP MOON.
WITHIN THE LEAD VAN SITS A TALL MAN, HIS SHADOW-FLECKED FACE IMMOBILE, EVEN TO THE GLAZED GREEN EYES GLOWING UNMISTAKABLY IN THE GLOOM.
IT IS THE DEVIL DOCTOR, FU MANCHU.
HIS LORRIES WERE TO HAVE BEEN FILLED WITH MIMOSA-TAINTED GASOLINE, BUT FU MANCHU'S SON DETERMINED OTHERWISE. NOW THEY ROLL EMPTY DOWN DESERTED BACK TRAILS--
--OR, PERHAPS... NOT SO DESERTED.
NOW, YOU MEN!
STRIKE NOW!
NAYLAND SMITH'S CRY PRECIPITATES A HORDE OF NIGHT-DARK FIGURES INTO THE PALE OCHER LAMPLIGHT--
--THEIR INTRICATE WEAPONRY COCKED AND READY IN THEIR ROCK-STEADY FISTS, AND THEIR STATE AND FEDERAL BADGES AT HAND!

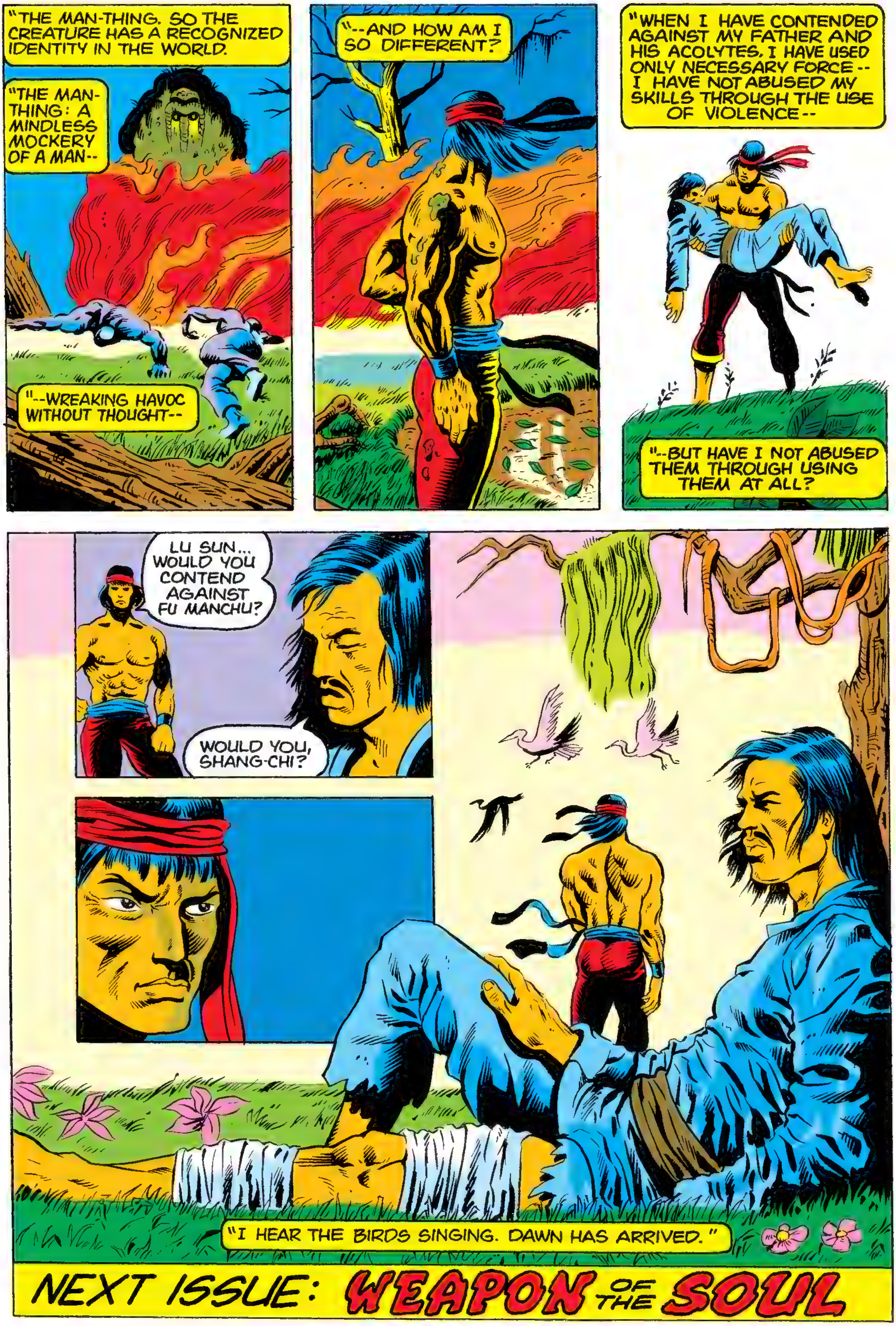

THE MASTER OF THE SI-FAN'S MEN GIVE THEIR REPLY!
KAPOW! KAPOW!
KRAK!
KRAK!
KRAK!
SUDDENLY, FRAMED IN A STITCHWORK OF SCREAMING DEATH--
--BLACK JACK TARR COMES RACING TOWARD THE LEAD VAN!
NAYLAND SMITH'S AIDE-DE-CAMP USUALLY PREFERS THE DIRECT ROUTE!
COME QUIETLY, DOCTOR, OR I'LL--
HE'S GONE!
--VANISHED-- FROM AN ENCLOSED TRUCK THAT WAS ALWAYS IN FULL VIEW!
HOW COULD THE FIEND HAVE MANAGED IT?

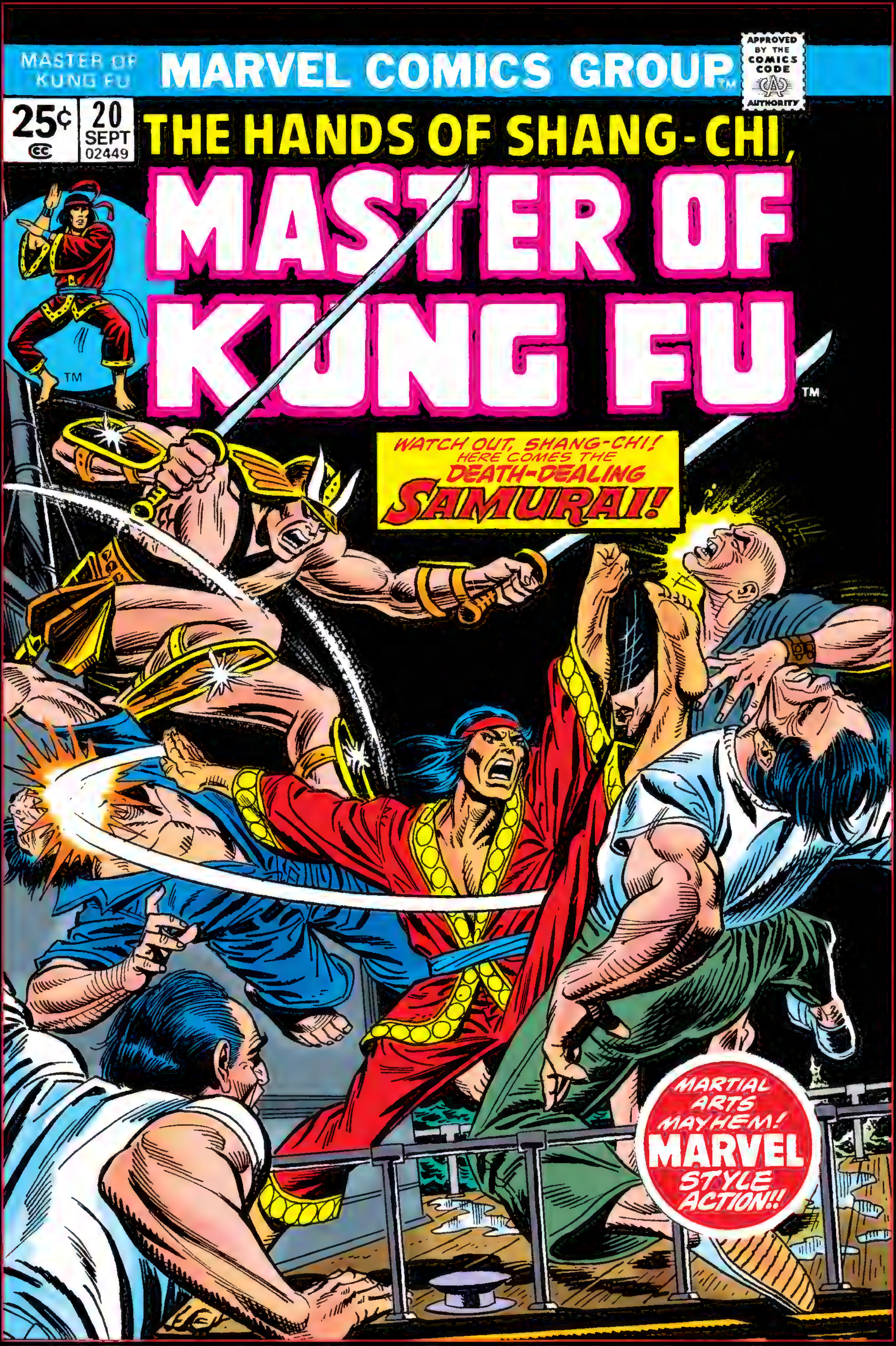

HOW, OLD FRIEND? HOW HAS HE MANAGED TO ESCAPE ME FOR OVER SIXTY YEARS?
HE IS... DOCTOR FU MANCHU.
NEXT TIME, SIR DENIS. NEXT TIME.
VIOLENCE BREEDS VIOLENCE. NO ONE IS IMMUNE.
TUNK!
THOK!
"LU SUN LEAPED TO HIS FEET EVEN AS THE ARROWS IMPALED HIM.
"HIS SENSES HAD WARNED HIM --
"--TOO LATE! NOW MY RISING HALTS IN MID-MOTION--
"--AS TWIN BLADES THRUST PAST MY NECK.
OBSERVE HIM, DAHAR. HE IS SURPRISED TO MEET US AGAIN-- AND SO UNEXPECTEDLY.'
HE DOES NOT UNDERSTAND HUNTERS, JEKIN-- HOW OUR LIVES ARE AS SAND COMPARED TO THE URGENCY OF THE PREY'S FINAL END!
AFTER ALL, HE IS BUT A YOUTH...


...WHO WILL NEVER GREET OLD AGE.
"OBVIOUSLY, THEIR ATTACK OCCURS NEXT, AND I TWIST FISH-LIKE TO AVOID THEIR PRECISION.
"THE WORDS OF LU SUN HAVE BEEN FEW, YET CHARGED WITH QUIET INSIGHT. HE IS THE FIRST PERSON WITH WHOM I HAVE BEEN ABLE TO SPEAK REGARDING MY LIFE--
"--AND THE CONTENTION WITH JEKIN AND DAHAR BECOMES QUITE DIFFERENT FROM OUR EARLIER ENCOUNTERS.
"I AM NO MORE SKILLFUL, AND THEY NO LESS, BUT I HAVE BECOME THE STRONGEST.


"THEY KNOW THIS, INSTINCTIVELY, AND THEIR ACTIONS NOW ACQUIRE THE SHRILL EDGE OF FRENZY. I AM EVER MORE FLUID--
"--BUT EVEN AT THAT, I CANNOT KNOW OF HIDDEN--
"--QUICKSAND!
"MY FOOT HOLDS ME, MUCH AS DID THE SWAMP-CREATURE IN MY MADNESS--
"--AND NOW, ALL SUPPORT GIVES WAY, PLUNGING ME TO MY HIPS IN THE CHURNING, CLINGING POOL.
"YET MY THOUGHTS CONTINUE CALMLY, UNIMPAIRED.
"IF MY LIFE ENDS HERE, THRU SWAMP OR SWORD--
"--I HAVE FILLED IT WELL.
WHA--?
"IT IS THE SWAMP-CREATURE, COME SHUFFLING FROM THE STEAMING DARKNESS, FOR REASONS I MAY NEVER UNDERSTAND.
"MY TWO OPPONENTS TURN AS ONE TOWARD THE BEHEMOTH, AND RESPOND TO THEIR FIRST SIGHT OF IT MUCH AS I DID. ITS MISSHAPEN BULK CAUSES WONDERMENT, AWE--
"--AND IN THESE HUNTERS, MINDS ALREADY FIRED WITH THE BLOOD-LUST, IT AROUSES A NEED FOR DESTRUCTION.
NO! DO NOT TOUCH IT--FOR YOUR BRAVADO IS FOUNDED IN FEAR--
--AND IN MY TRAVELS, I HAVE HEARD IT SAID--


WHOSOEVER KNOWS FEAR-- BURNS AT THE MAN-THING'S TOUCH!


"THE MAN-THING. SO THE CREATURE HAS A RECOGNIZED IDENTITY IN THE WORLD.
"THE MAN-THING: A MINDLESS MOCKERY OF A MAN--
"--WREAKING HAVOC WITHOUT THOUGHT--
"--AND HOW AM I SO DIFFERENT?
"WHEN I HAVE CONTENDED AGAINST MY FATHER AND HIS ACOLYTES, I HAVE USED ONLY NECESSARY FORCE -- I HAVE NOT ABUSED MY SKILLS THROUGH THE USE OF VIOLENCE --
"--BUT HAVE I NOT ABUSED THEM THROUGH USING THEM AT ALL?
LU SUN... WOULD YOU CONTEND AGAINST FU MANCHU?
WOULD YOU, SHANG-CHI?
"I HEAR THE BIRDS SINGING. DAWN HAS ARRIVED."
NEXT ISSUE: WEAPON OF THE SOUL


MASTER OF KUNG FU
MARVEL COMICS GROUP
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25¢
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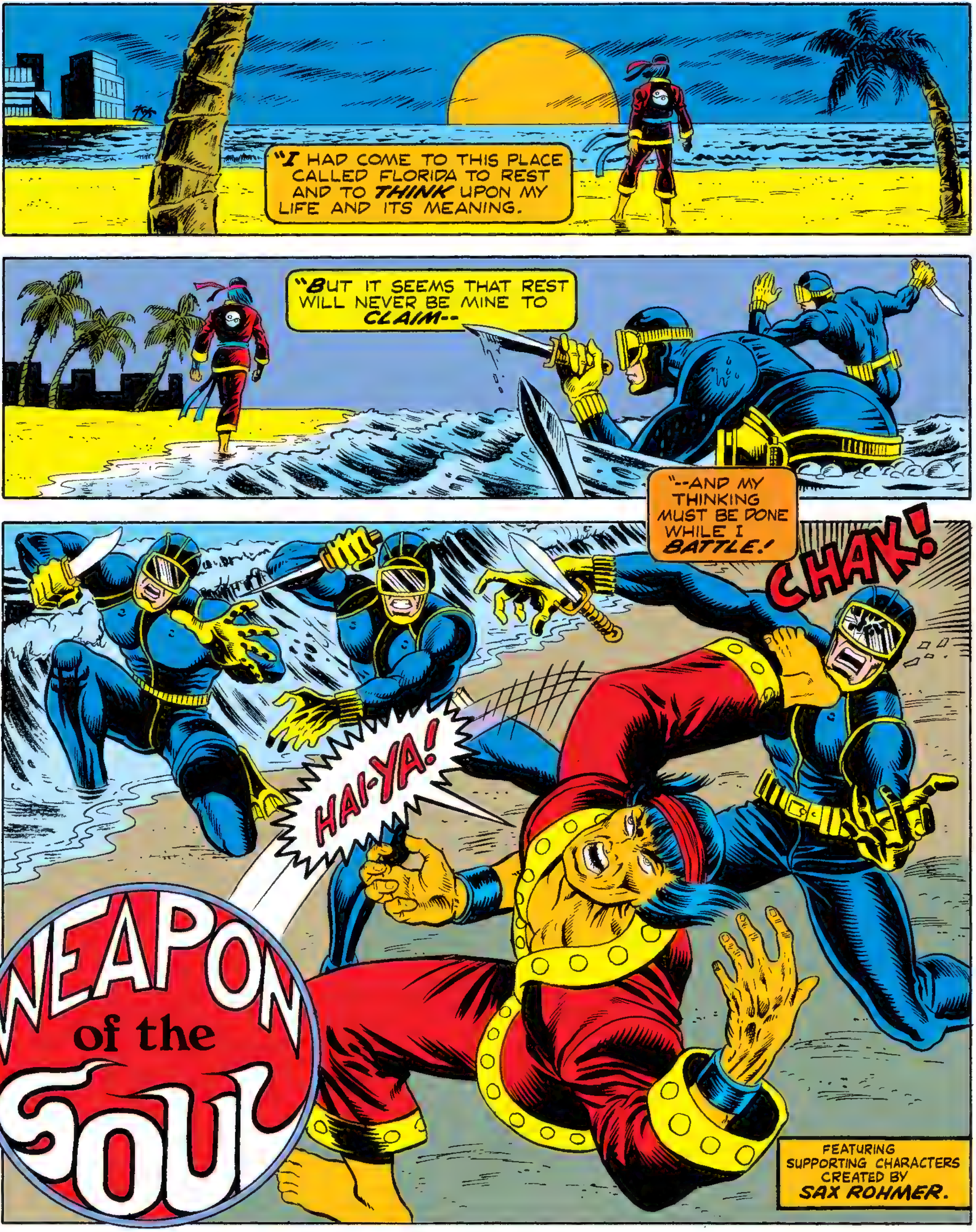
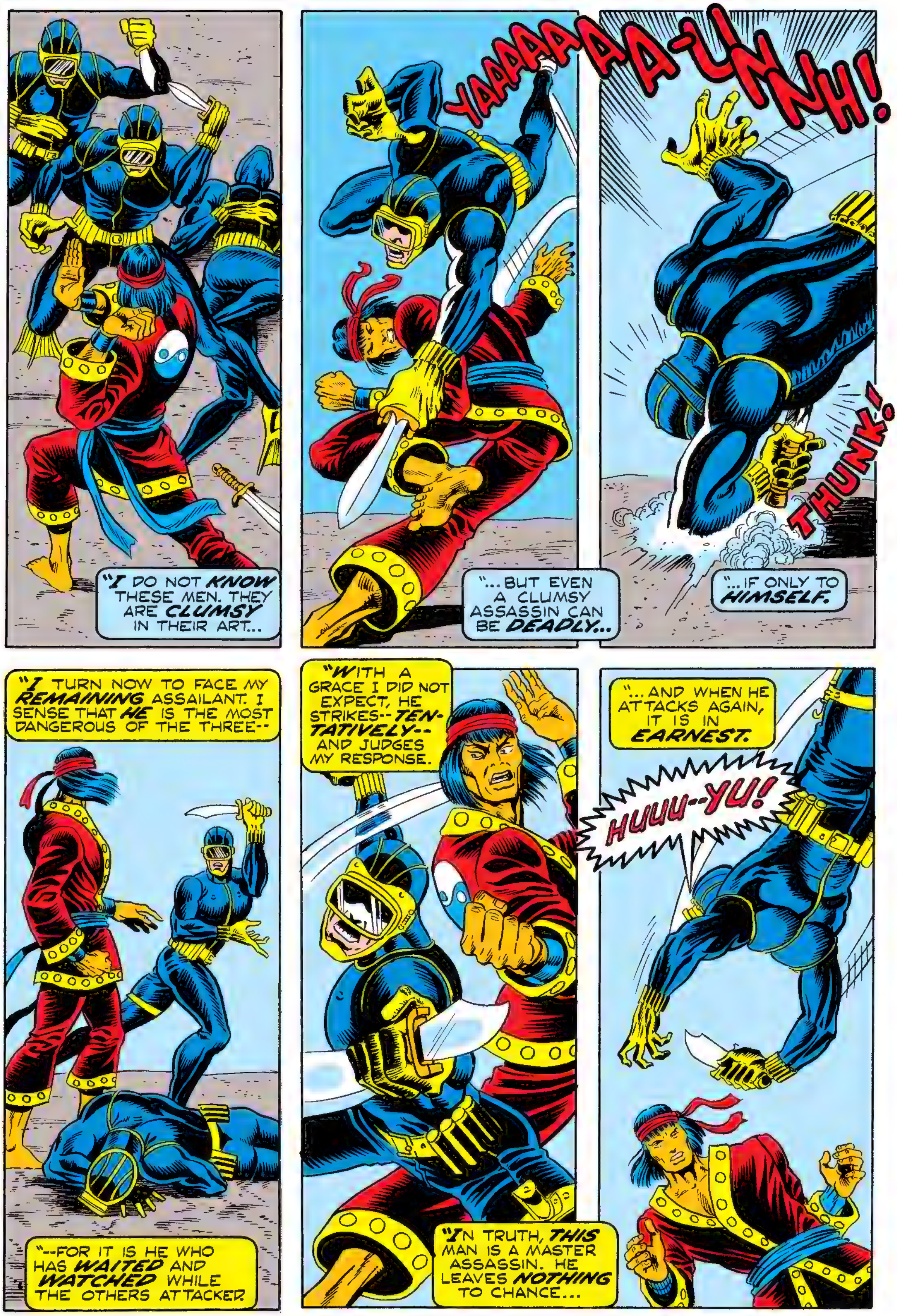
THE HANDS OF SHANG-CHI,
MASTER OF KUNG FU
WATCH OUT, SHANG-CHI! HERE COMES THE DEATH-DEALING SAMURAI!
MARTIAL ARTS MAYHEM! MARVEL STYLE ACTION!!

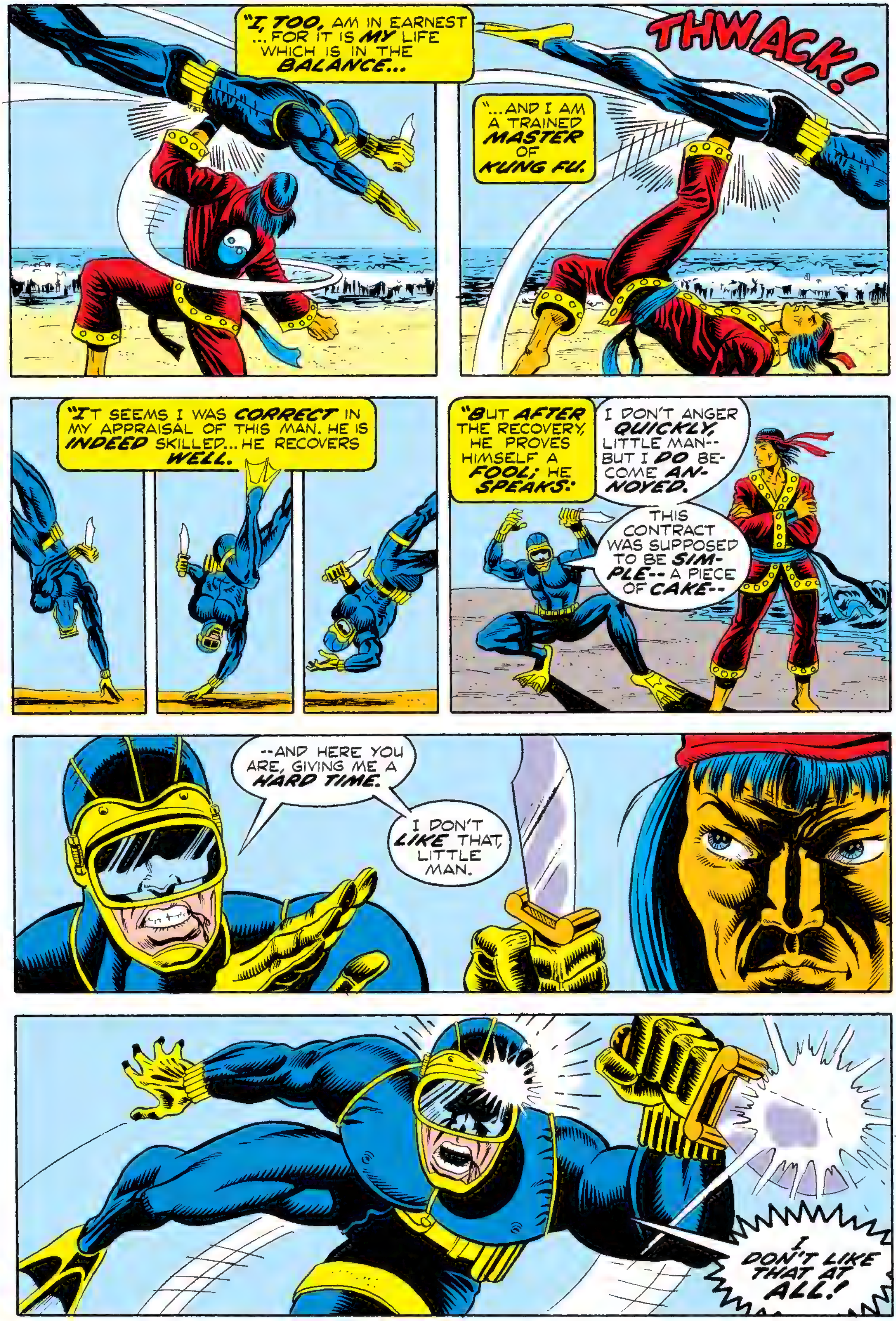
Stan Lee PRESENTS:

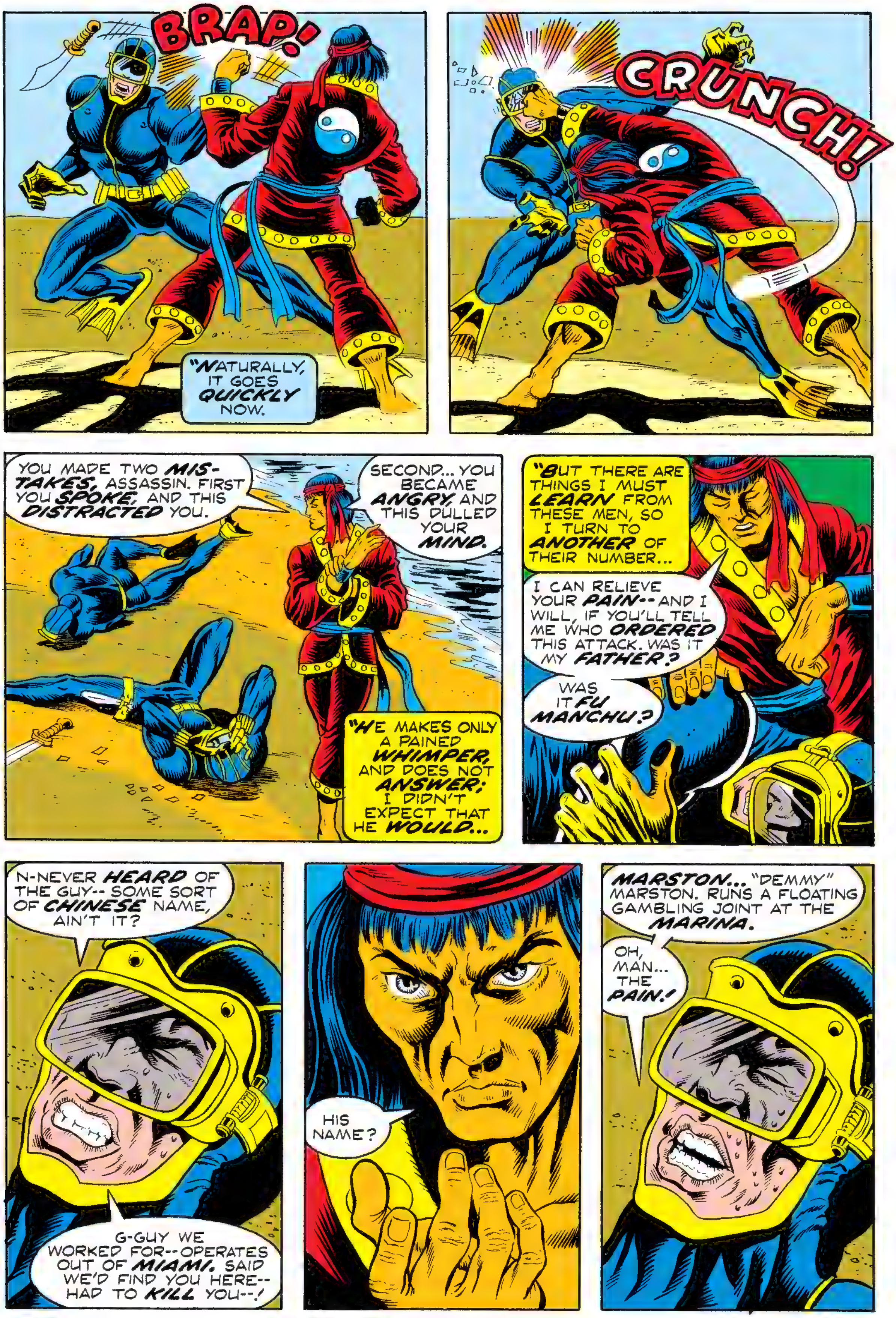
MASTER OF KUNG FU!™

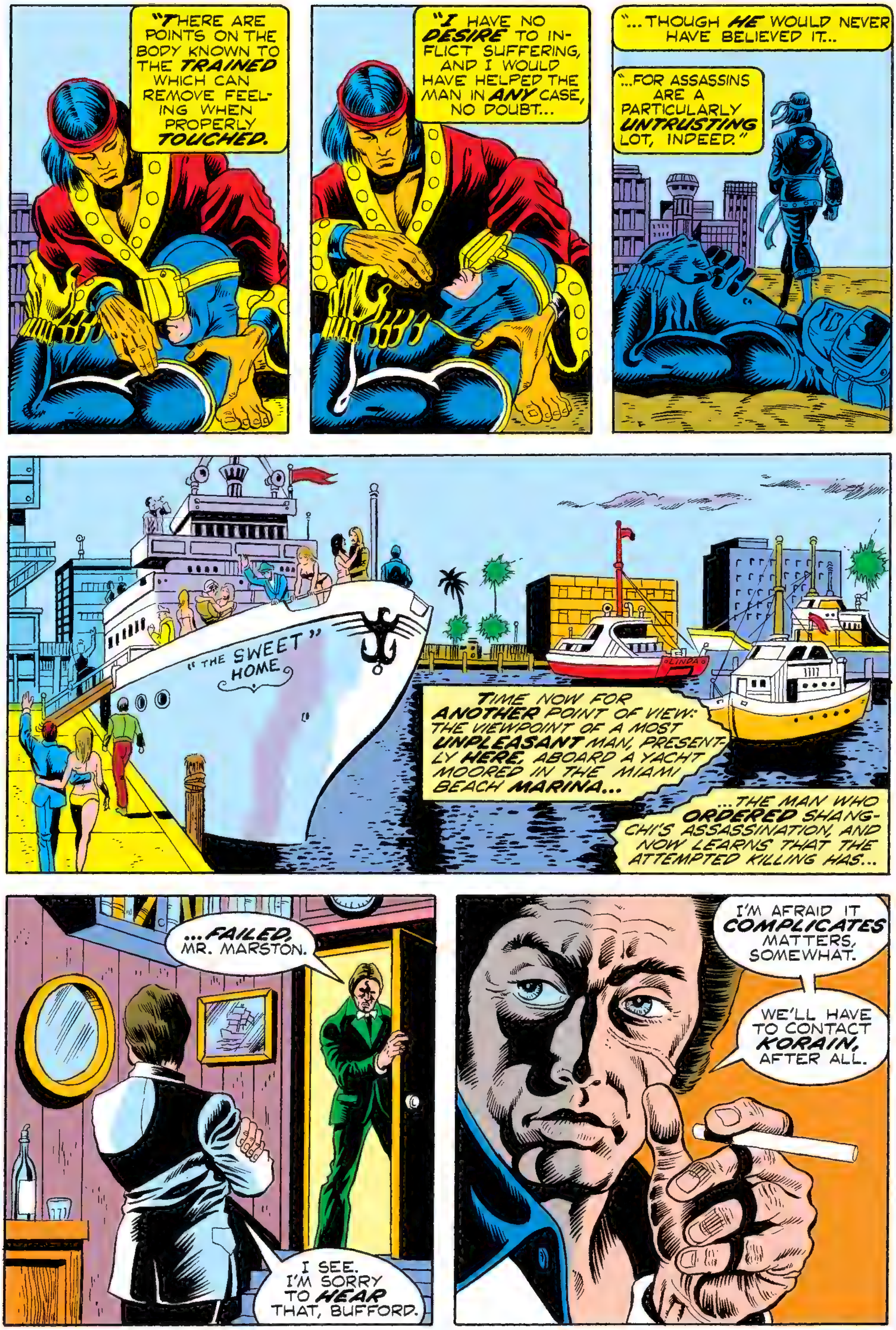
GERRY CONWAY ✶ PAUL GULACY ✶ AL MILGROM ✶ DAVE HUNT ✶ ROY THOMAS
SPEECH ✶ VISION ✶ WEIGHT ✶ LETTERS ✶ DIRECTION
G. ROUSSOS
COLORS

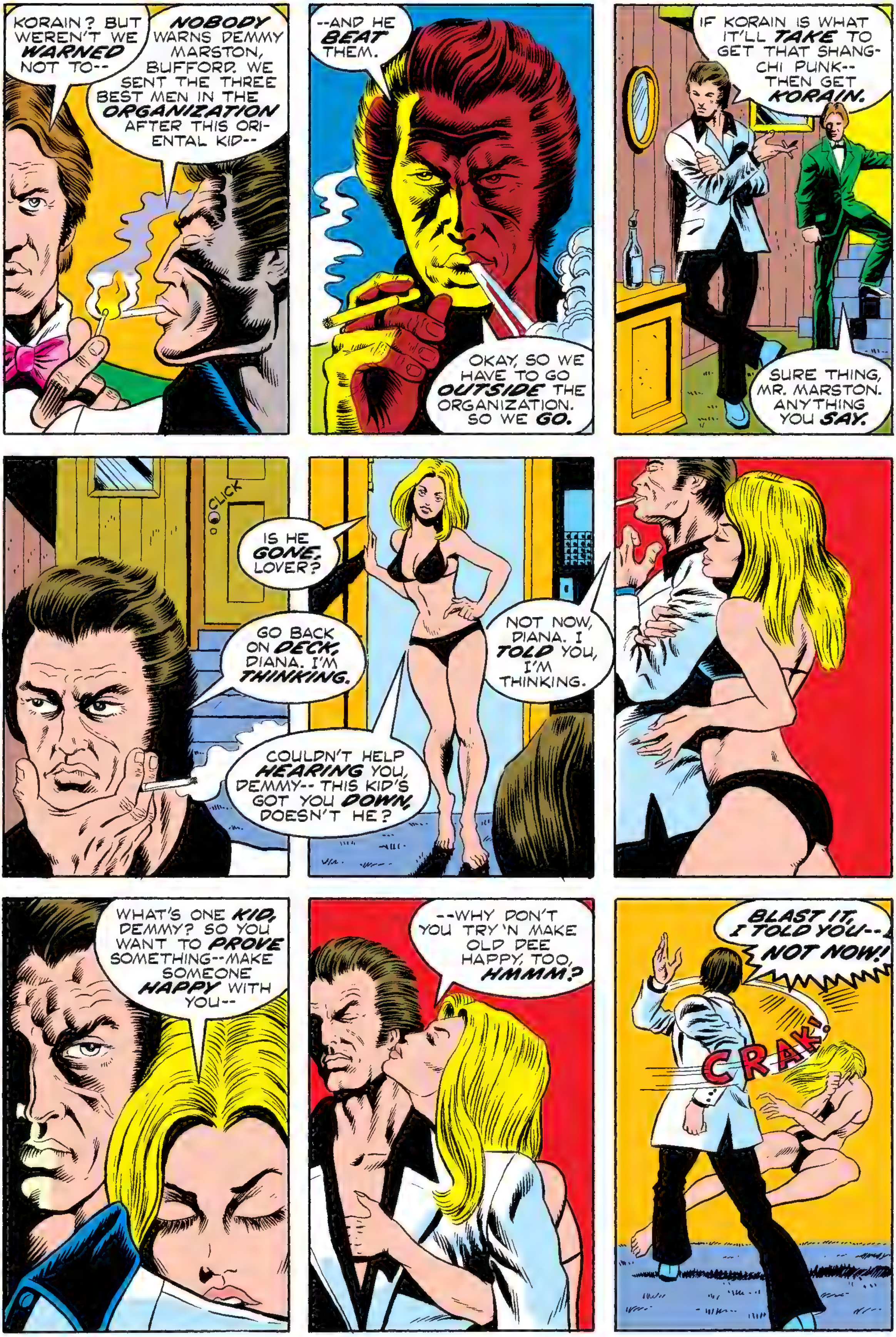

"I HAD COME TO THIS PLACE CALLED FLORIDA TO REST AND TO THINK UPON MY LIFE AND ITS MEANING.
"BUT IT SEEMS THAT REST WILL NEVER BE MINE TO CLAIM--
"--AND MY THINKING MUST BE DONE WHILE I BATTLE!
CHAK!
HAI-YA!
WEAPON of the SOUL
FEATURING SUPPORTING CHARACTERS CREATED BY SAX ROHMER.

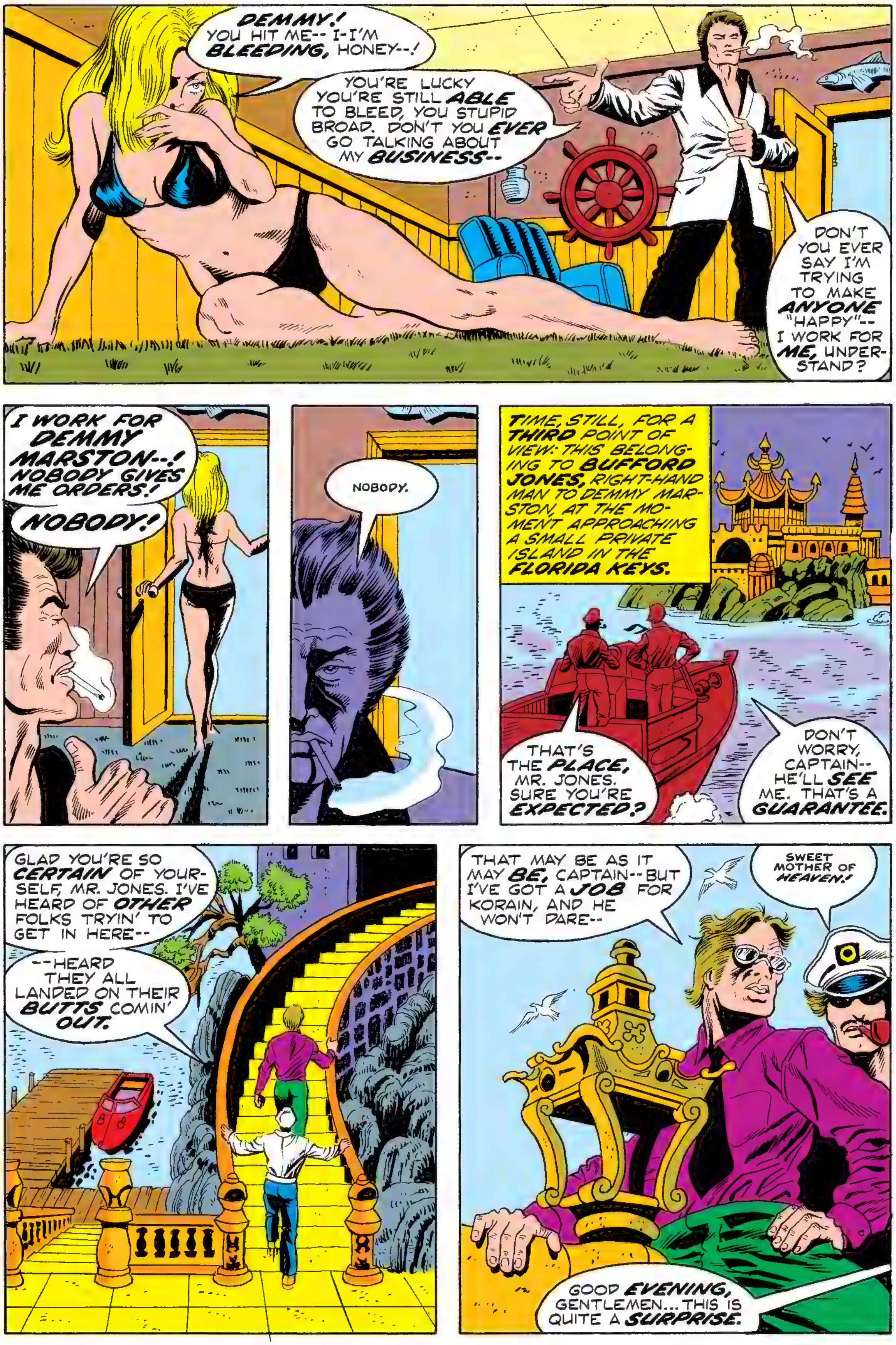

"I DO NOT KNOW THESE MEN. THEY ARE CLUMSY IN THEIR ART...
YAAAAAAA-UNNH!
"...BUT EVEN A CLUMSY ASSASSIN CAN BE DEADLY...
THUNK!
"...IF ONLY TO HIMSELF.
"I TURN NOW TO FACE MY REMAINING ASSAILANT. I SENSE THAT HE IS THE MOST DANGEROUS OF THE THREE--
"--FOR IT IS HE WHO HAS WAITED AND WATCHED WHILE THE OTHERS ATTACKED.
"WITH A GRACE I DID NOT EXPECT, HE STRIKES--TENTATIVELY--AND JUDGES MY RESPONSE.
"IN TRUTH, THIS MAN IS A MASTER ASSASSIN. HE LEAVES NOTHING TO CHANCE...
"...AND WHEN HE ATTACKS AGAIN, IT IS IN EARNEST.
HUUU--YU!

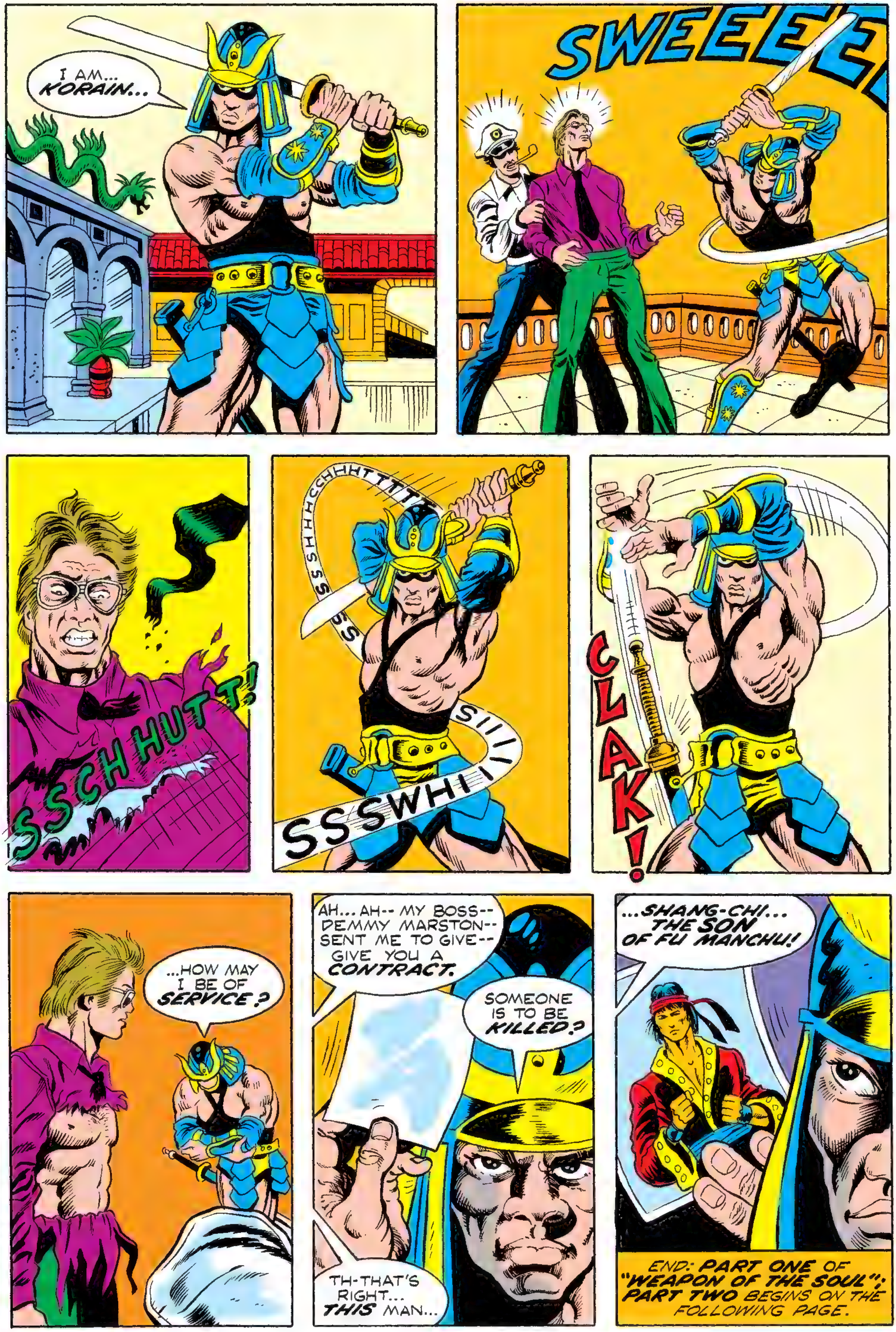

"I, TOO, AM IN EARNEST ...FOR IT IS MY LIFE WHICH IS IN THE BALANCE...
THWACK!
"...AND I AM A TRAINED MASTER OF KUNG FU.
"IT SEEMS I WAS CORRECT IN MY APPRAISAL OF THIS MAN. HE IS INDEED SKILLED... HE RECOVERS WELL.
"BUT AFTER THE RECOVERY, HE PROVES HIMSELF A FOOL; HE SPEAKS:
I DON'T ANGER QUICKLY, LITTLE MAN-- BUT I DO BECOME ANNOYED.
THIS CONTRACT WAS SUPPOSED TO BE SIMPLE-- A PIECE OF CAKE--
--AND HERE YOU ARE, GIVING ME A HARD TIME.
I DON'T LIKE THAT, LITTLE MAN.
I DON'T LIKE THAT AT ALL!

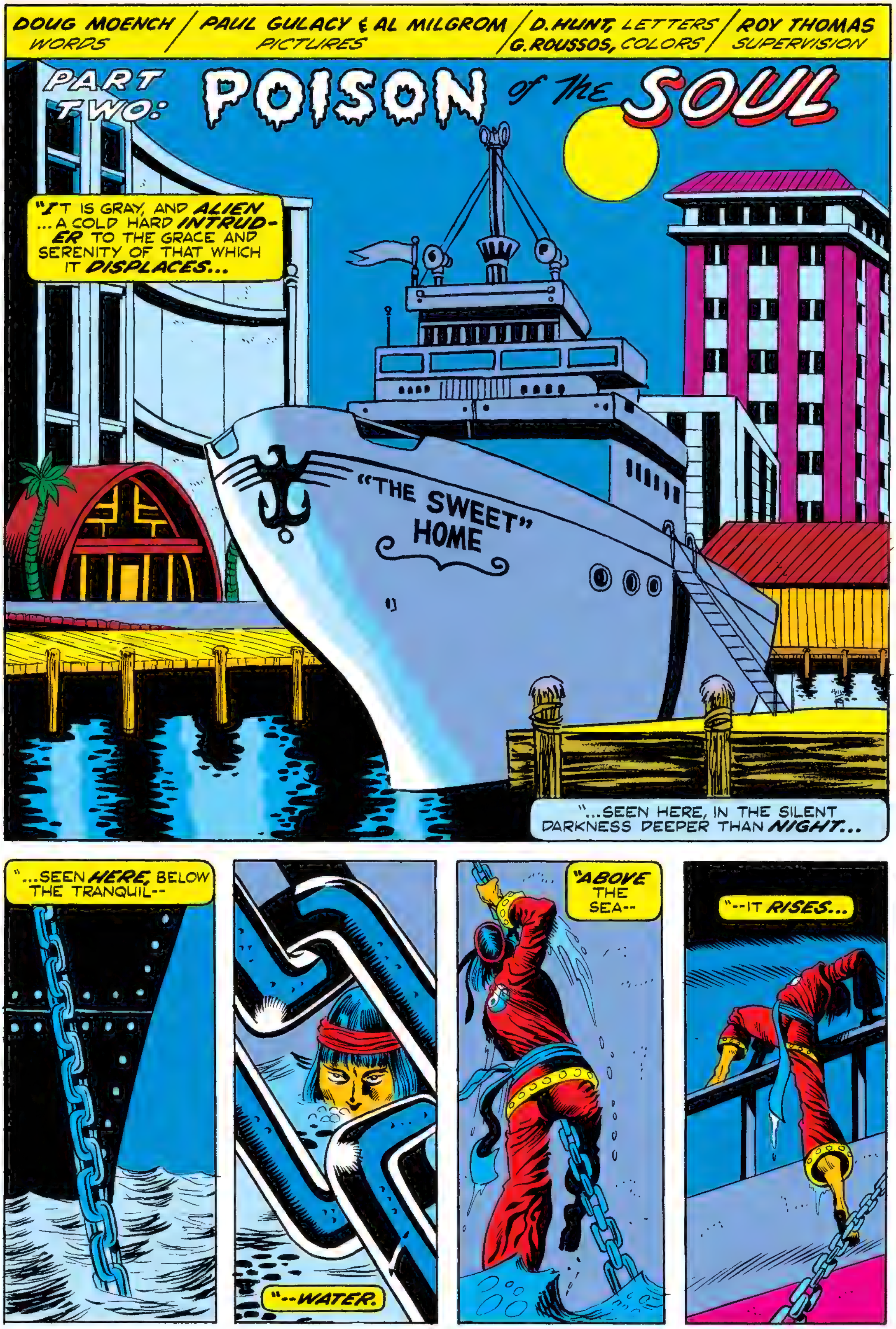

BRAP!
"NATURALLY, IT GOES QUICKLY NOW.
CRUNCH!
YOU MADE TWO MISTAKES, ASSASSIN. FIRST YOU SPOKE, AND THIS DISTRACTED YOU.
SECOND... YOU BECAME ANGRY, AND THIS DULLED YOUR MIND.
"HE MAKES ONLY A PAINED WHIMPER, AND DOES NOT ANSWER; I DIDN'T EXPECT THAT HE WOULD...
"BUT THERE ARE THINGS I MUST LEARN FROM THESE MEN, SO I TURN TO ANOTHER OF THEIR NUMBER...
I CAN RELIEVE YOUR PAIN-- AND I WILL, IF YOU'LL TELL ME WHO ORDERED THIS ATTACK. WAS IT MY FATHER?
WAS IT FU MANCHU?
N-NEVER HEARD OF THE GUY-- SOME SORT OF CHINESE NAME, AIN'T IT?
G-GUY WE WORKED FOR-- OPERATES OUT OF MIAMI. SAID WE'D FIND YOU HERE-- HAD TO KILL YOU--!
HIS NAME?
MARSTON... "DEMMY" MARSTON. RUNS A FLOATING GAMBLING JOINT AT THE MARINA.
OH, MAN... THE PAIN!

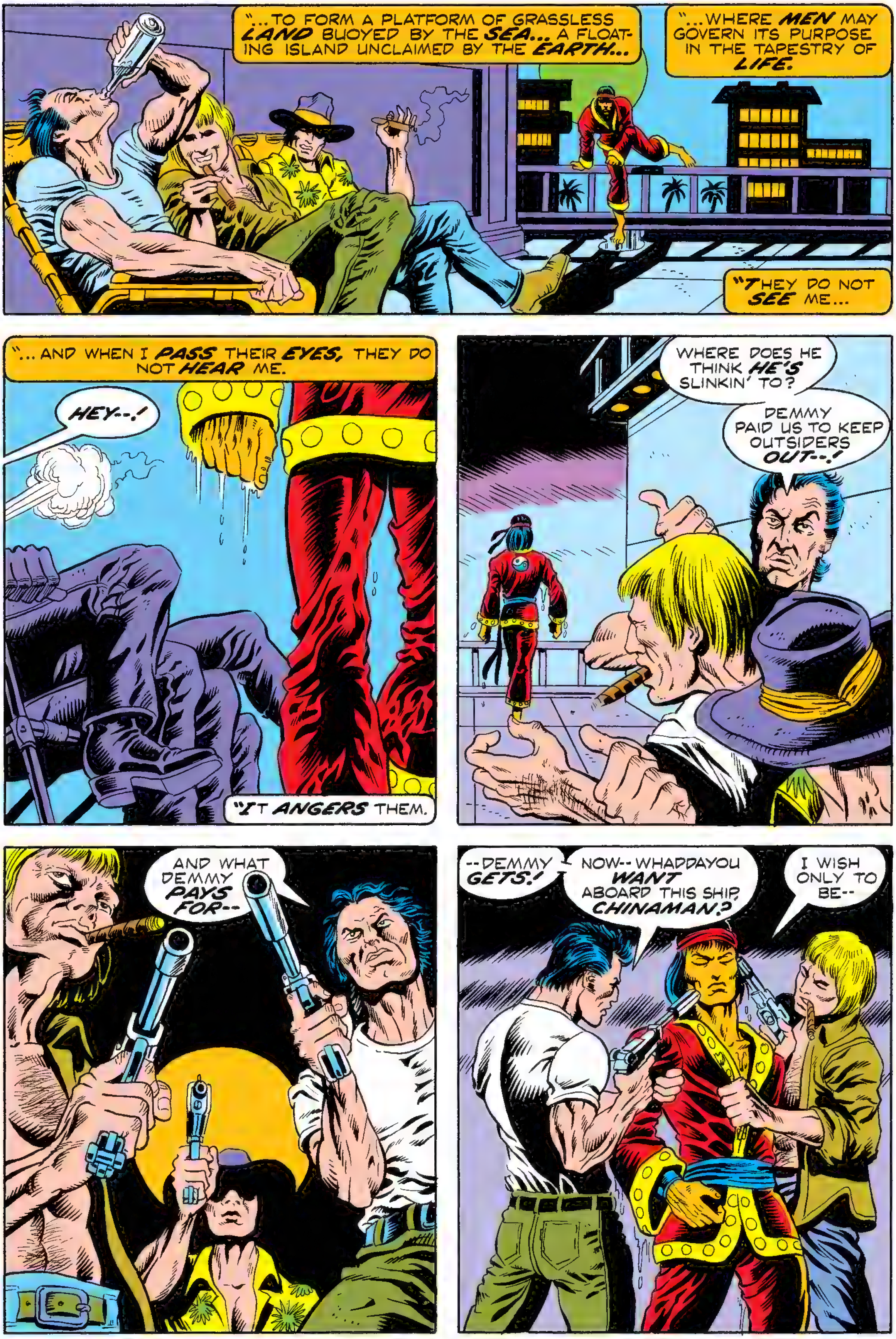

"THERE ARE POINTS ON THE BODY KNOWN TO THE *TRAINED* WHICH CAN REMOVE FEELING WHEN PROPERLY *TOUCHED.*
"I HAVE NO *DESIRE* TO INFLICT SUFFERING, AND I WOULD HAVE HELPED THE MAN IN *ANY* CASE, NO DOUBT...
"...THOUGH *HE* WOULD NEVER HAVE BELIEVED IT...
"...FOR ASSASSINS ARE A PARTICULARLY *UNTRUSTING* LOT, INDEED."
"THE SWEET HOME"
LINDA
TIME NOW FOR *ANOTHER* POINT OF VIEW: THE VIEWPOINT OF A MOST *UNPLEASANT* MAN, PRESENTLY *HERE,* ABOARD A YACHT MOORED IN THE MIAMI BEACH *MARINA...*
...THE MAN WHO *ORDERED* SHANG-CHI'S ASSASSINATION, AND NOW LEARNS THAT THE ATTEMPTED KILLING HAS...
...*FAILED,* MR. MARSTON.
I SEE. I'M SORRY TO *HEAR* THAT, BUFFORD.
I'M AFRAID IT *COMPLICATES* MATTERS, SOMEWHAT.
WE'LL HAVE TO CONTACT *KORAIN,* AFTER ALL.

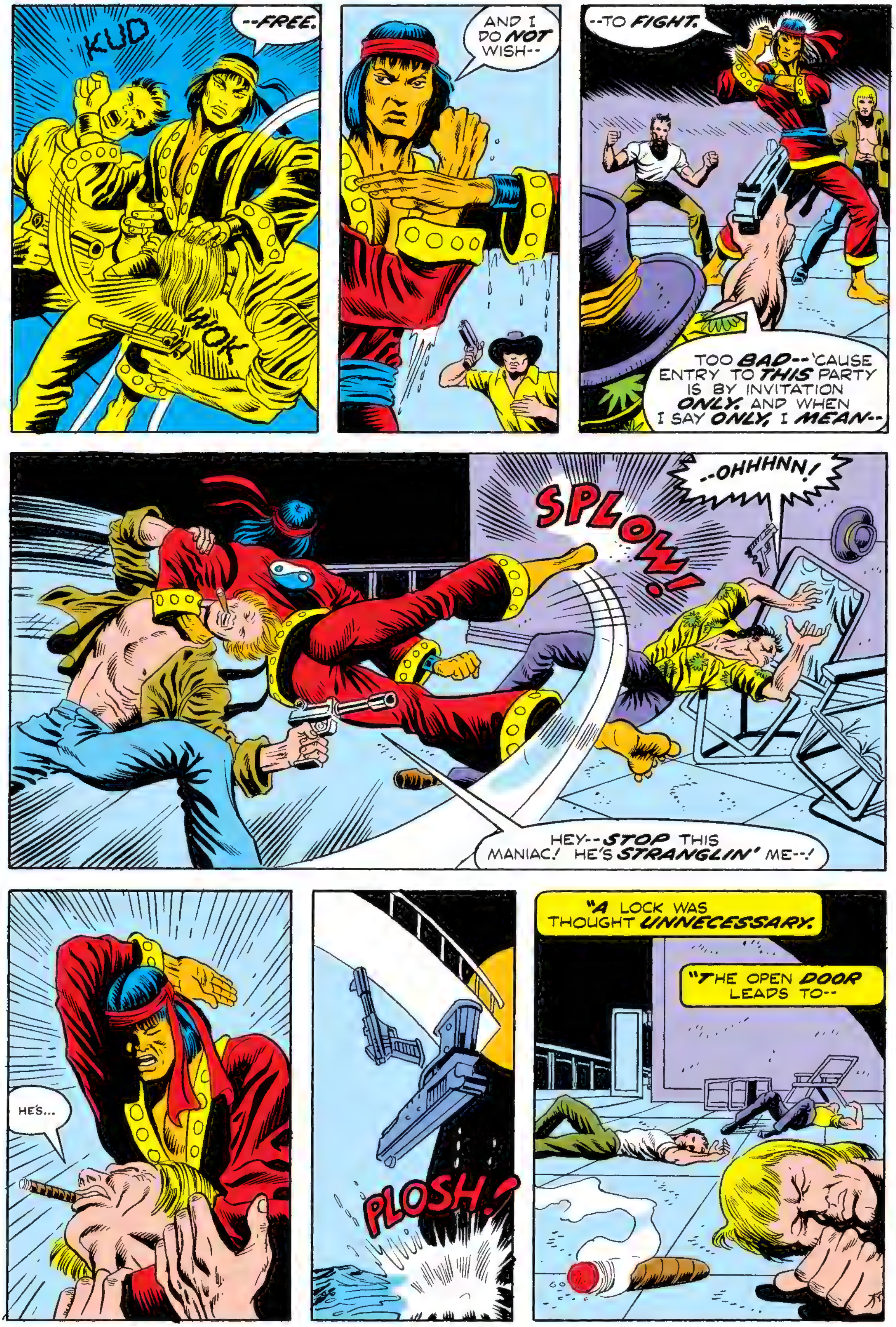

KORAIN? BUT WEREN'T WE **WARNED** NOT TO--
NOBODY WARNS DEMMY MARSTON, BUFFORD. WE SENT THE THREE BEST MEN IN THE **ORGANIZATION** AFTER THIS ORIENTAL KID--
--AND HE **BEAT** THEM.
OKAY, SO WE HAVE TO GO **OUTSIDE** THE ORGANIZATION. SO WE **GO.**
IF KORAIN IS WHAT IT'LL **TAKE** TO GET THAT SHANG-CHI PUNK--THEN GET **KORAIN.**
SURE THING, MR. MARSTON. ANYTHING YOU **SAY.**
CLICK
IS HE **GONE,** LOVER?
GO BACK ON **DECK,** DIANA. I'M **THINKING.**
COULDN'T HELP **HEARING** YOU, DEMMY-- THIS KID'S GOT YOU **DOWN,** DOESN'T HE?
NOT NOW, DIANA. I **TOLD** YOU, I'M THINKING.
WHAT'S ONE **KID,** DEMMY? SO YOU WANT TO **PROVE** SOMETHING--MAKE SOMEONE **HAPPY** WITH YOU--
--WHY DON'T YOU TRY 'N MAKE OLD DEE HAPPY, TOO, **HMMM?**
BLAST IT, I TOLD YOU-- NOT NOW!
CRAK!

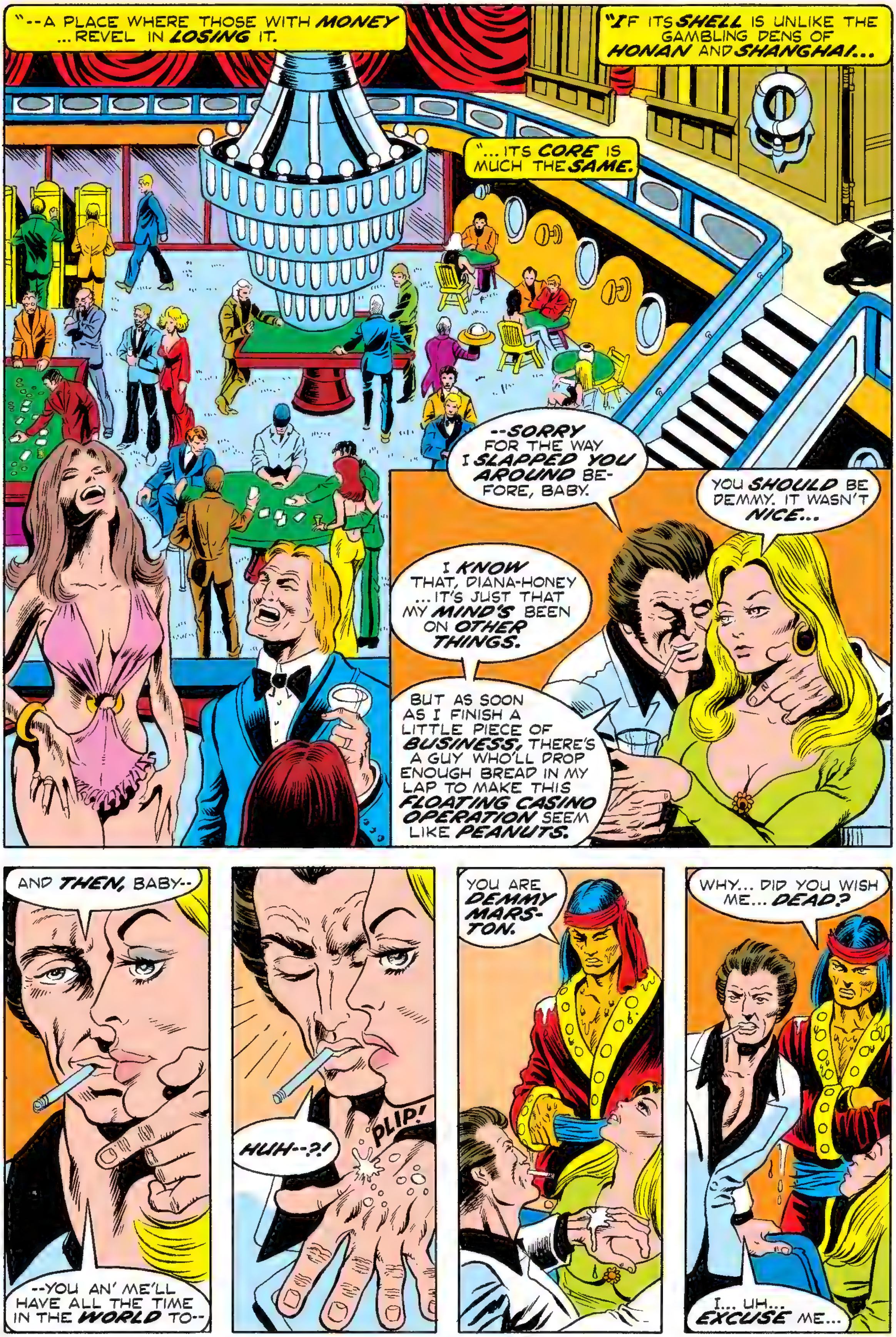

DEMMY! YOU HIT ME-- I-I'M BLEEDING, HONEY--!
YOU'RE LUCKY YOU'RE STILL ABLE TO BLEED, YOU STUPID BROAD. DON'T YOU EVER GO TALKING ABOUT MY BUSINESS--
DON'T YOU EVER SAY I'M TRYING TO MAKE ANYONE "HAPPY"-- I WORK FOR ME, UNDERSTAND?
I WORK FOR DEMMY MARSTON--! NOBODY GIVES ME ORDERS!
NOBODY!
NOBODY.
TIME, STILL, FOR A THIRD POINT OF VIEW: THIS BELONGING TO BUFFORD JONES, RIGHT-HAND MAN TO DEMMY MARSTON, AT THE MOMENT APPROACHING A SMALL PRIVATE ISLAND IN THE FLORIDA KEYS.
THAT'S THE PLACE, MR. JONES. SURE YOU'RE EXPECTED?
DON'T WORRY, CAPTAIN-- HE'LL SEE ME. THAT'S A GUARANTEE.
GLAD YOU'RE SO CERTAIN OF YOURSELF, MR. JONES. I'VE HEARD OF OTHER FOLKS TRYIN' TO GET IN HERE--
--HEARD THEY ALL LANDED ON THEIR BUTTS COMIN' OUT.
THAT MAY BE AS IT MAY BE, CAPTAIN--BUT I'VE GOT A JOB FOR KORAIN, AND HE WON'T DARE--
SWEET MOTHER OF HEAVEN!
GOOD EVENING, GENTLEMEN... THIS IS QUITE A SURPRISE.

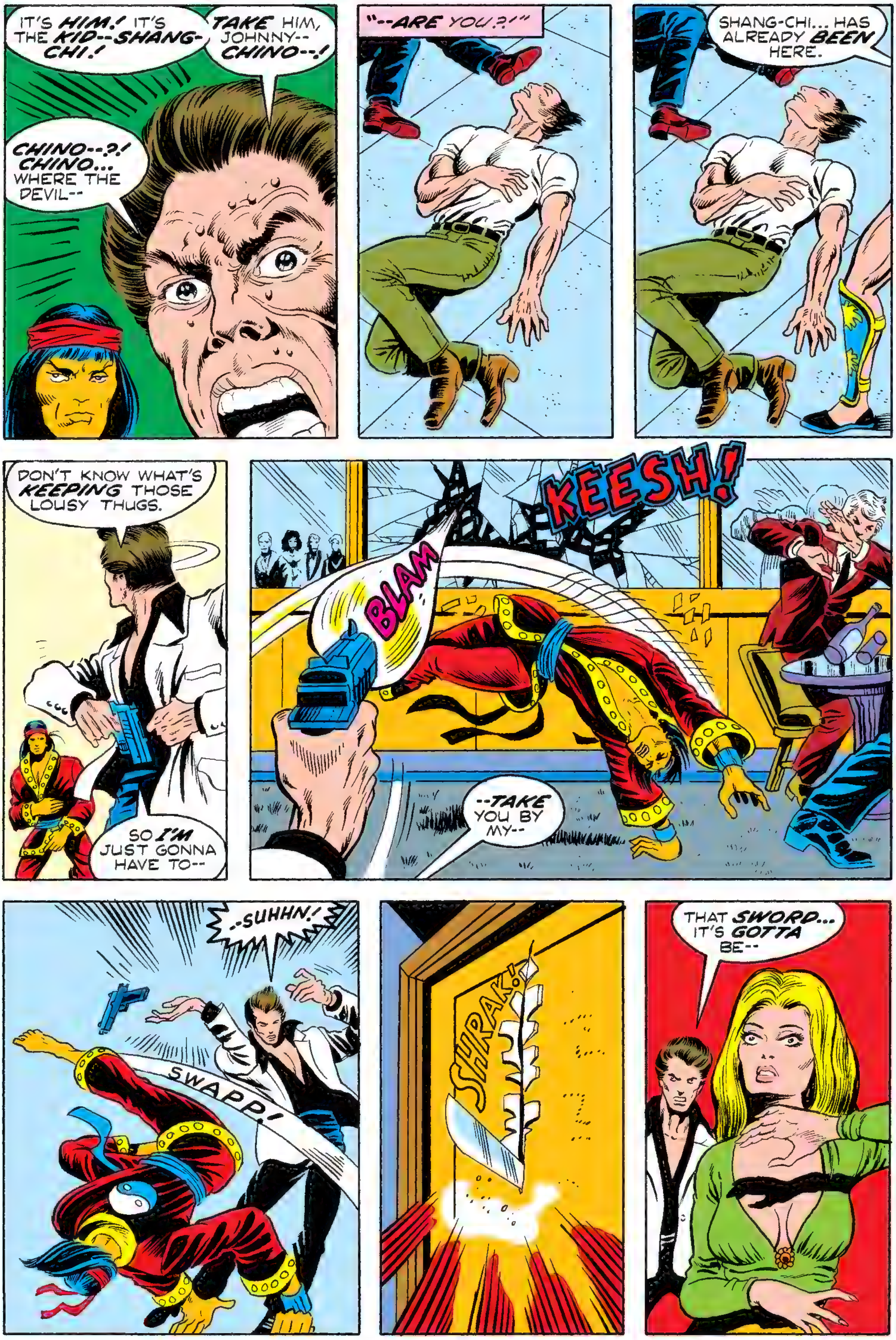

I AM... KORAIN...
SWEEEE
SSCHHUTT!
SSSHHCCHHHTTT
SSSWHI
CLAK!
...HOW MAY I BE OF SERVICE?
AH... AH-- MY BOSS-- DEMMY MARSTON-- SENT ME TO GIVE-- GIVE YOU A CONTRACT.
SOMEONE IS TO BE KILLED?
TH-THAT'S RIGHT... THIS MAN...
...SHANG-CHI... THE SON OF FU MANCHU!
END: PART ONE OF "WEAPON OF THE SOUL"; PART TWO BEGINS ON THE FOLLOWING PAGE.

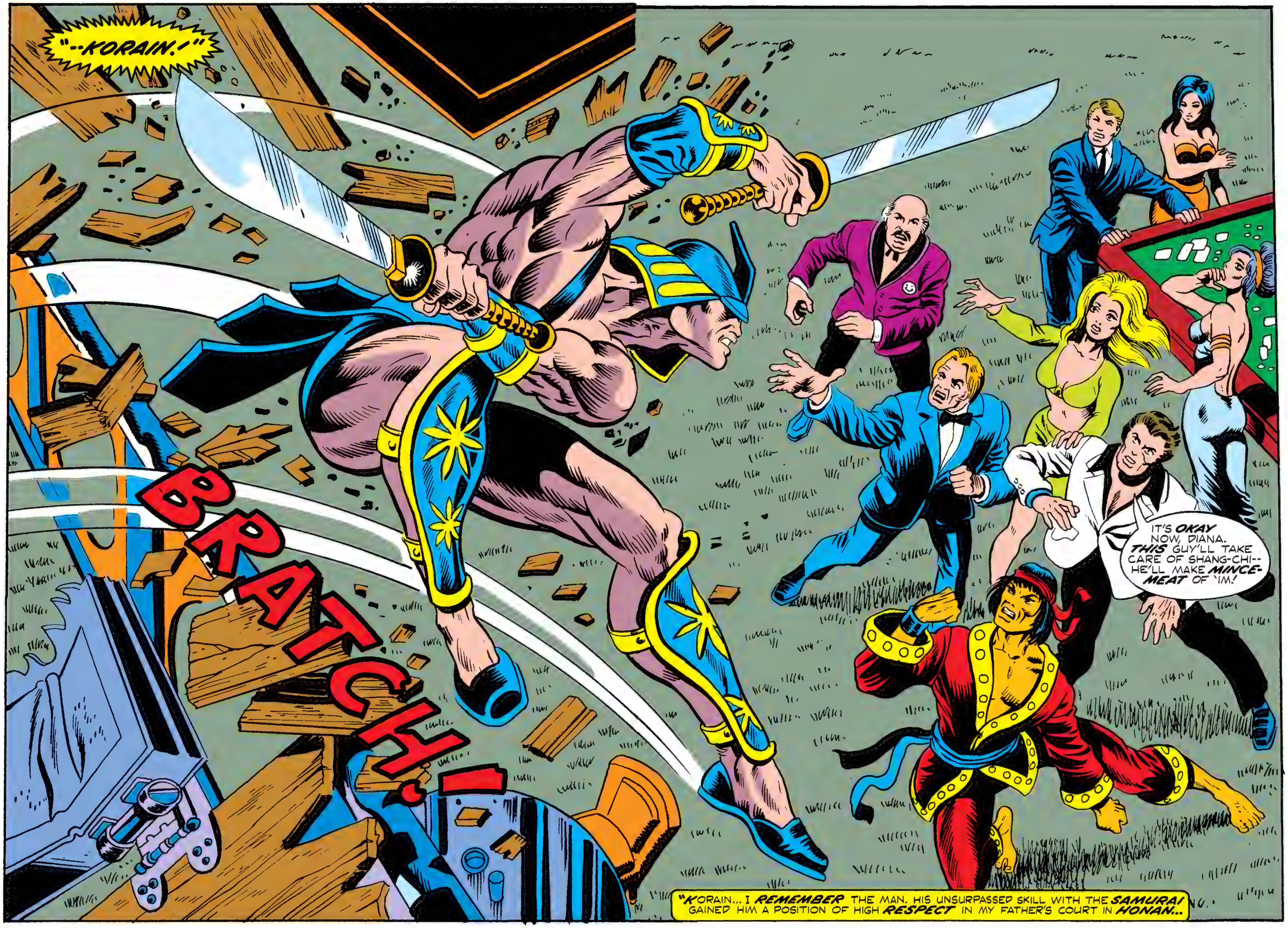

DOUG MOENCH WORDS / PAUL GULACY & AL MILGROM PICTURES / D. HUNT, LETTERS G. ROUSSOS, COLORS / ROY THOMAS SUPERVISION
PART TWO: POISON of the SOUL
"IT IS GRAY, AND ALIEN ...A COLD HARD INTRUDER TO THE GRACE AND SERENITY OF THAT WHICH IT DISPLACES...
"THE SWEET" HOME
"...SEEN HERE, IN THE SILENT DARKNESS DEEPER THAN NIGHT...
"...SEEN HERE, BELOW THE TRANQUIL--
"--WATER.
"ABOVE THE SEA--
"--IT RISES...

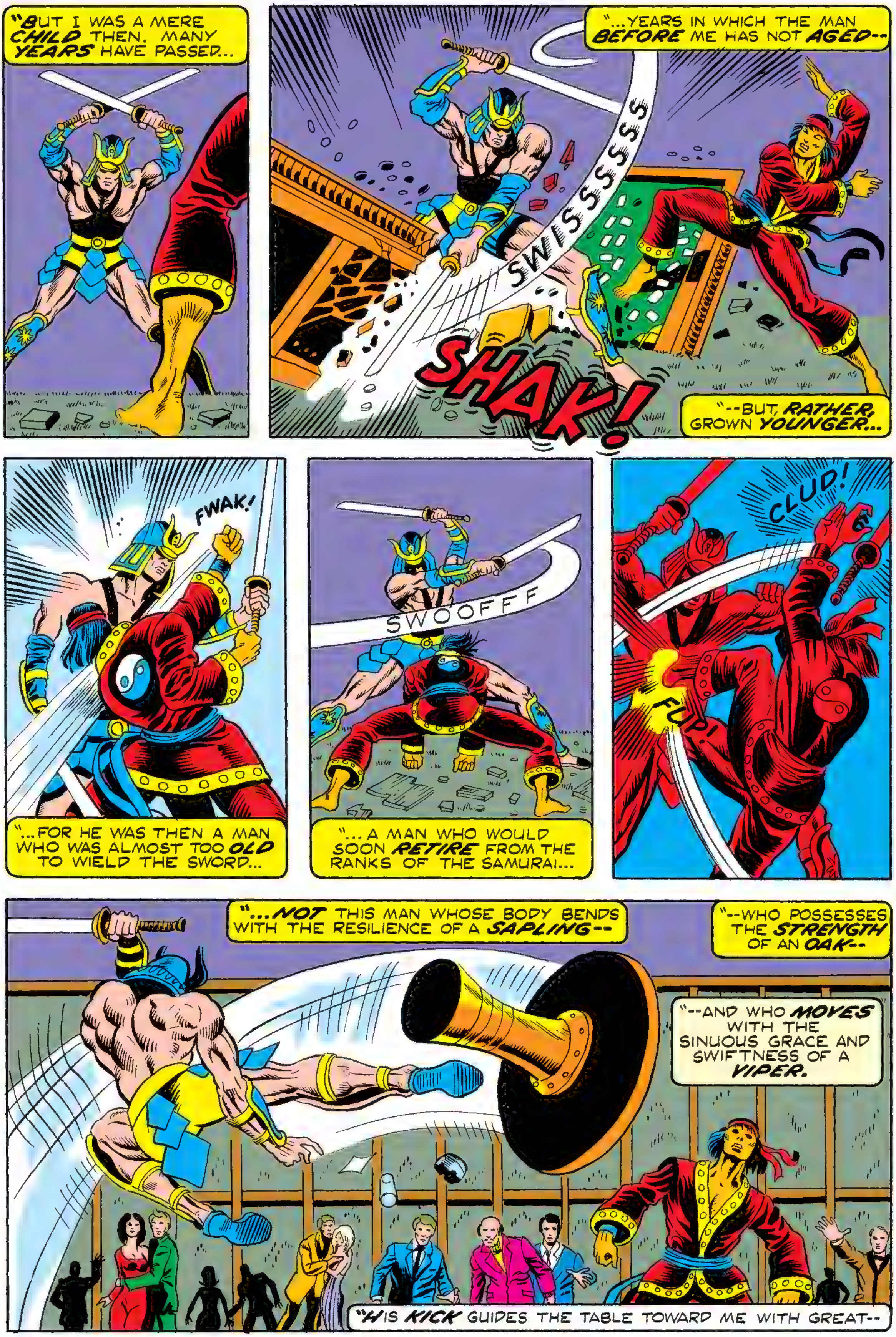

"...TO FORM A PLATFORM OF GRASSLESS *LAND* BUOYED BY THE *SEA...* A FLOATING ISLAND UNCLAIMED BY THE *EARTH...*
"...WHERE *MEN* MAY GOVERN ITS PURPOSE IN THE TAPESTRY OF *LIFE.*
"THEY DO NOT *SEE* ME...
"...AND WHEN I *PASS* THEIR *EYES,* THEY DO NOT *HEAR* ME.
HEY--!
"IT *ANGERS* THEM.
WHERE DOES HE THINK *HE'S* SLINKIN' TO?
DEMMY PAID US TO KEEP OUTSIDERS *OUT--!*
AND WHAT DEMMY *PAYS FOR--*
--DEMMY *GETS!*
NOW--WHADDAYOU *WANT* ABOARD THIS SHIP, *CHINAMAN?*
I WISH ONLY TO BE--

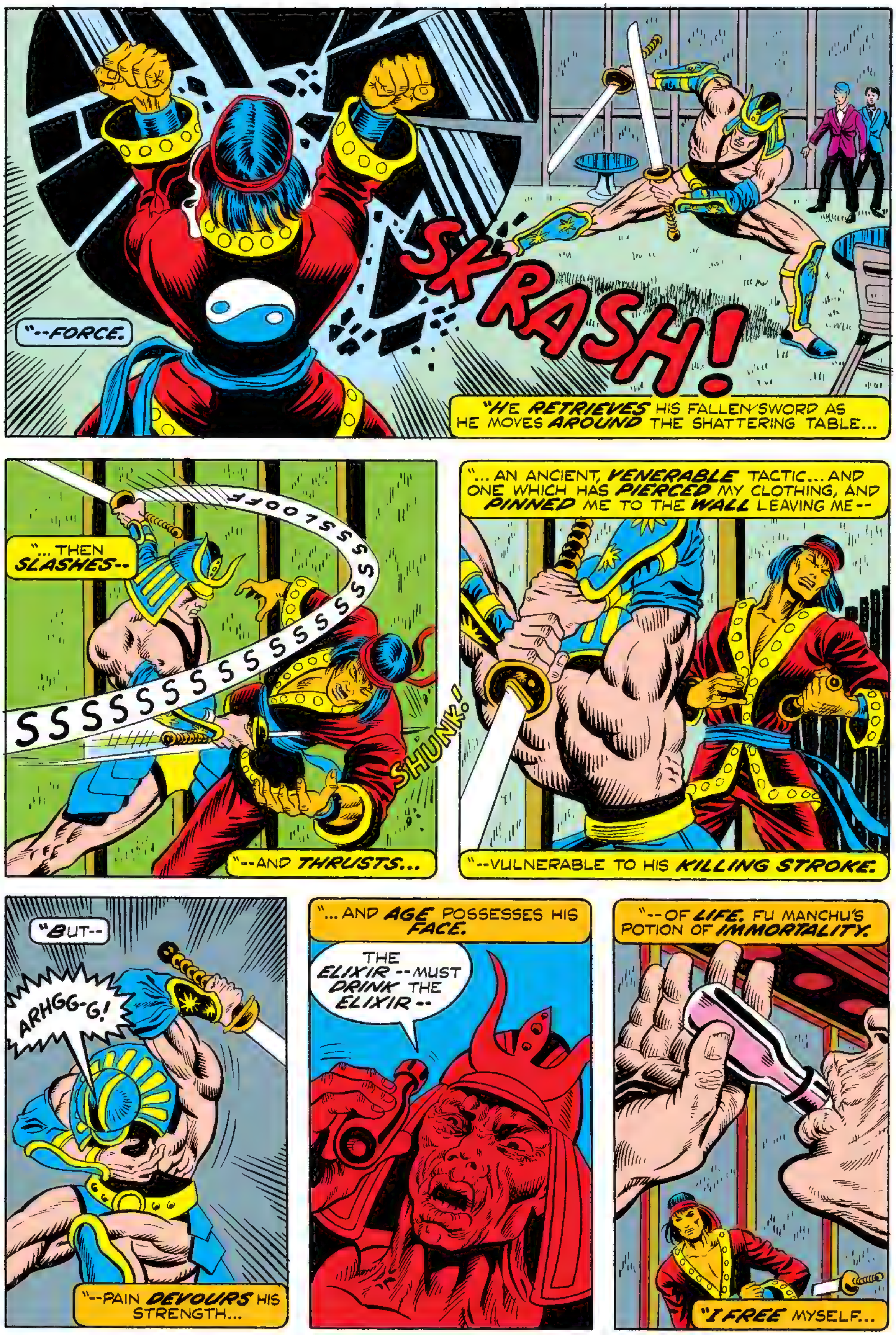

KUD
--FREE.
WOK
AND I DO NOT WISH--
--TO FIGHT.
TOO BAD-- 'CAUSE ENTRY TO THIS PARTY IS BY INVITATION ONLY. AND WHEN I SAY ONLY, I MEAN--
SPLOW!
--OHHHNN!
HEY--STOP THIS MANIAC! HE'S STRANGLIN' ME--!
HE'S...
PLOSH!
"A LOCK WAS THOUGHT UNNECESSARY.
"THE OPEN DOOR LEADS TO--

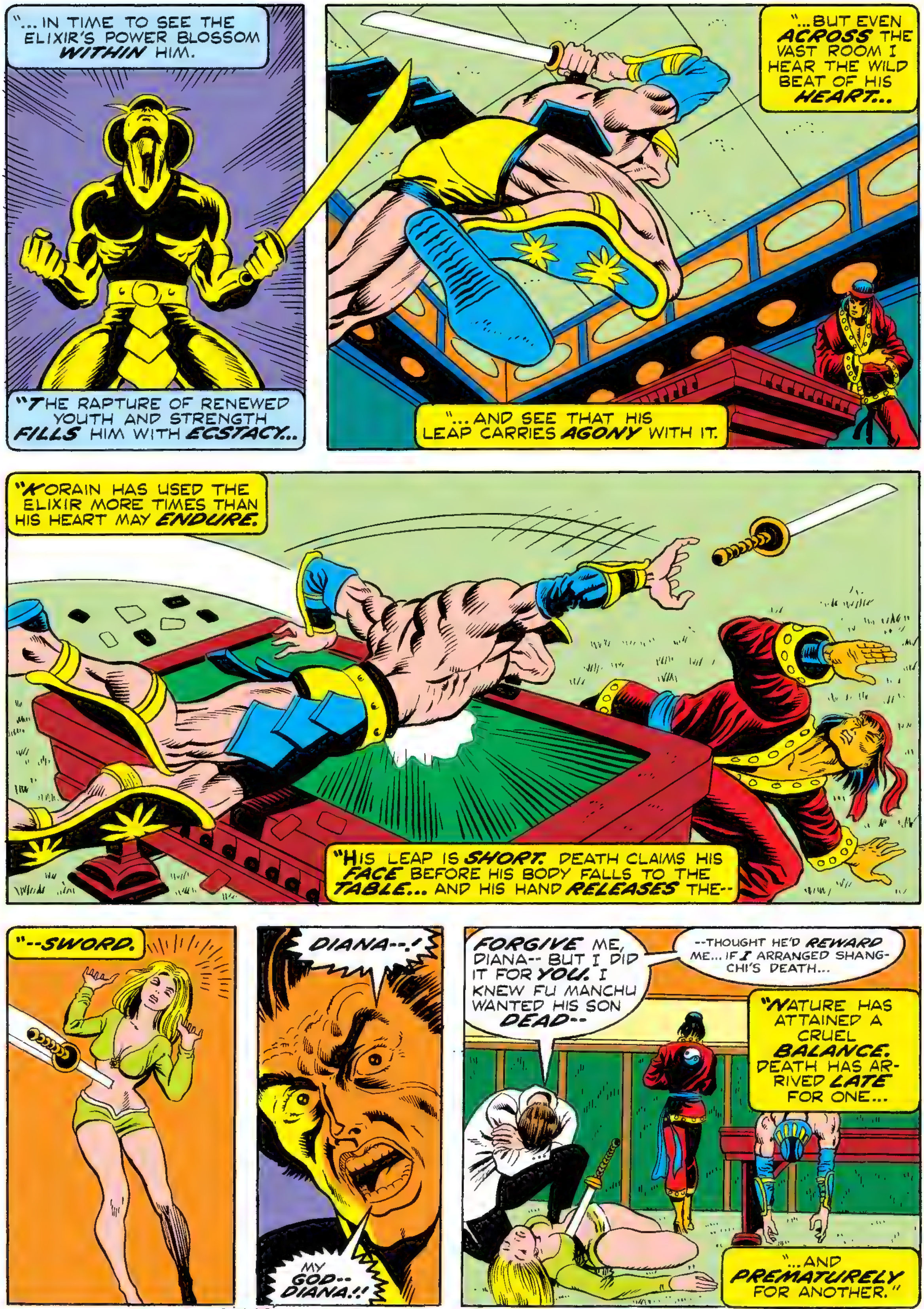

"--A PLACE WHERE THOSE WITH MONEY ...REVEL IN LOSING IT.
"IF ITS SHELL IS UNLIKE THE GAMBLING DENS OF HONAN AND SHANGHAI...
"...ITS CORE IS MUCH THE SAME.
--SORRY FOR THE WAY I SLAPPED YOU AROUND BEFORE, BABY.
YOU SHOULD BE DEMMY. IT WASN'T NICE...
I KNOW THAT, DIANA-HONEY ...IT'S JUST THAT MY MIND'S BEEN ON OTHER THINGS.
BUT AS SOON AS I FINISH A LITTLE PIECE OF BUSINESS, THERE'S A GUY WHO'LL DROP ENOUGH BREAD IN MY LAP TO MAKE THIS FLOATING CASINO OPERATION SEEM LIKE PEANUTS.
AND THEN, BABY--
--YOU AN' ME'LL HAVE ALL THE TIME IN THE WORLD TO--
PLIP!
HUH--?!
YOU ARE DEMMY MARSTON.
WHY... DID YOU WISH ME... DEAD?
I... UH... EXCUSE ME...


IT'S HIM! IT'S THE KID--SHANG-CHI!
TAKE HIM, JOHNNY--CHINO--!
CHINO--?! CHINO... WHERE THE DEVIL--
"--ARE YOU?!"
SHANG-CHI... HAS ALREADY BEEN HERE.
DON'T KNOW WHAT'S KEEPING THOSE LOUSY THUGS.
SO I'M JUST GONNA HAVE TO--
KEESH!
BLAM
--TAKE YOU BY MY--
--SUHHN!
SWAPP!
SHRAK!
THAT SWORD... IT'S GOTTA BE--

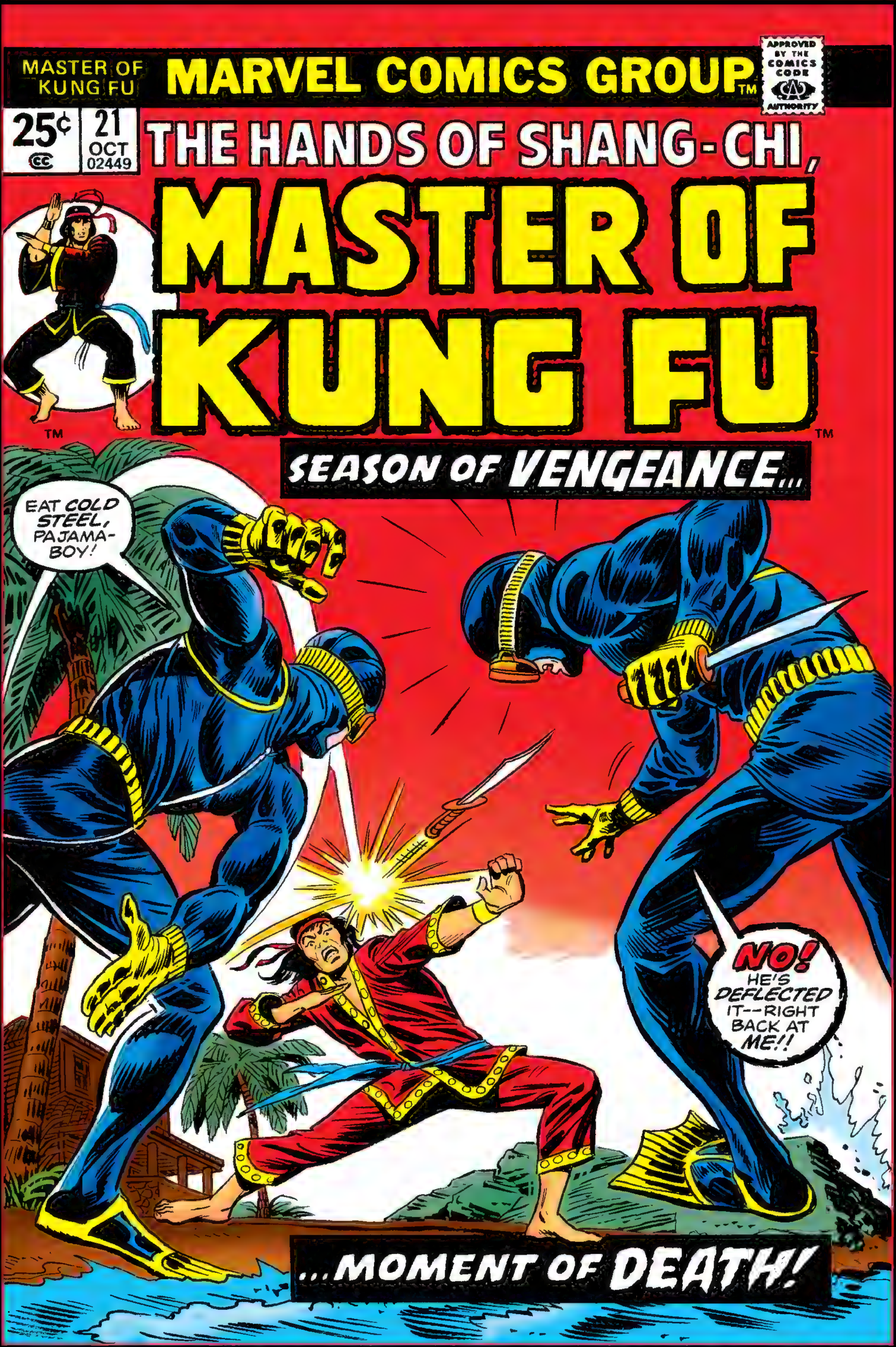

"--KORAIN!"
BRATCH!
IT'S OKAY NOW, DIANA. THIS GUY'LL TAKE CARE OF SHANG-CHI-- HE'LL MAKE MINCE-MEAT OF 'IM!
"KORAIN... I REMEMBER THE MAN. HIS UNSURPASSED SKILL WITH THE SAMURAI GAINED HIM A POSITION OF HIGH RESPECT IN MY FATHER'S COURT IN HONAN...


"BUT I WAS A MERE CHILD THEN. MANY YEARS HAVE PASSED...
"...YEARS IN WHICH THE MAN BEFORE ME HAS NOT AGED--
SWISSSSSSS
SHAK!
"--BUT, RATHER, GROWN YOUNGER...
FWAK!
"...FOR HE WAS THEN A MAN WHO WAS ALMOST TOO OLD TO WIELD THE SWORD...
SWOOFFF
"... A MAN WHO WOULD SOON RETIRE FROM THE RANKS OF THE SAMURAI...
CLUD!
FUP!
"...NOT THIS MAN WHOSE BODY BENDS WITH THE RESILIENCE OF A SAPLING--
"--WHO POSSESSES THE STRENGTH OF AN OAK--
"--AND WHO MOVES WITH THE SINUOUS GRACE AND SWIFTNESS OF A VIPER.
"HIS KICK GUIDES THE TABLE TOWARD ME WITH GREAT--


"--FORCE.
SKRASH!
"HE RETRIEVES HIS FALLEN SWORD AS HE MOVES AROUND THE SHATTERING TABLE...
"...THEN SLASHES--
SSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSLOOFF
SHUNK!
"--AND THRUSTS...
"...AN ANCIENT, VENERABLE TACTIC...AND ONE WHICH HAS PIERCED MY CLOTHING, AND PINNED ME TO THE WALL LEAVING ME--
"--VULNERABLE TO HIS KILLING STROKE.
"BUT--
ARHGG-G!
"--PAIN DEVOURS HIS STRENGTH...
"...AND AGE POSSESSES HIS FACE.
THE ELIXIR--MUST DRINK THE ELIXIR--
"--OF LIFE. FU MANCHU'S POTION OF IMMORTALITY.
"I FREE MYSELF...


"...IN TIME TO SEE THE ELIXIR'S POWER BLOSSOM *WITHIN* HIM.
"THE RAPTURE OF RENEWED YOUTH AND STRENGTH *FILLS* HIM WITH *ECSTACY*...
"...BUT EVEN *ACROSS* THE VAST ROOM I HEAR THE WILD BEAT OF HIS *HEART*...
"...AND SEE THAT HIS LEAP CARRIES *AGONY* WITH IT.
"KORAIN HAS USED THE ELIXIR MORE TIMES THAN HIS HEART MAY *ENDURE.*
"HIS LEAP IS *SHORT.* DEATH CLAIMS HIS *FACE* BEFORE HIS BODY FALLS TO THE *TABLE*... AND HIS HAND *RELEASES* THE--
"--*SWORD.*
DIANA--!
MY GOD--DIANA!!
FORGIVE ME, DIANA-- BUT I DID IT FOR *YOU.* I KNEW FU MANCHU WANTED HIS SON *DEAD*--
--THOUGHT HE'D *REWARD* ME... IF *I* ARRANGED SHANG-CHI'S DEATH...
"NATURE HAS ATTAINED A CRUEL *BALANCE.* DEATH HAS ARRIVED *LATE* FOR ONE...
"...AND *PREMATURELY* FOR ANOTHER."

NEXT ISSUE: MURDER AT MARINELAND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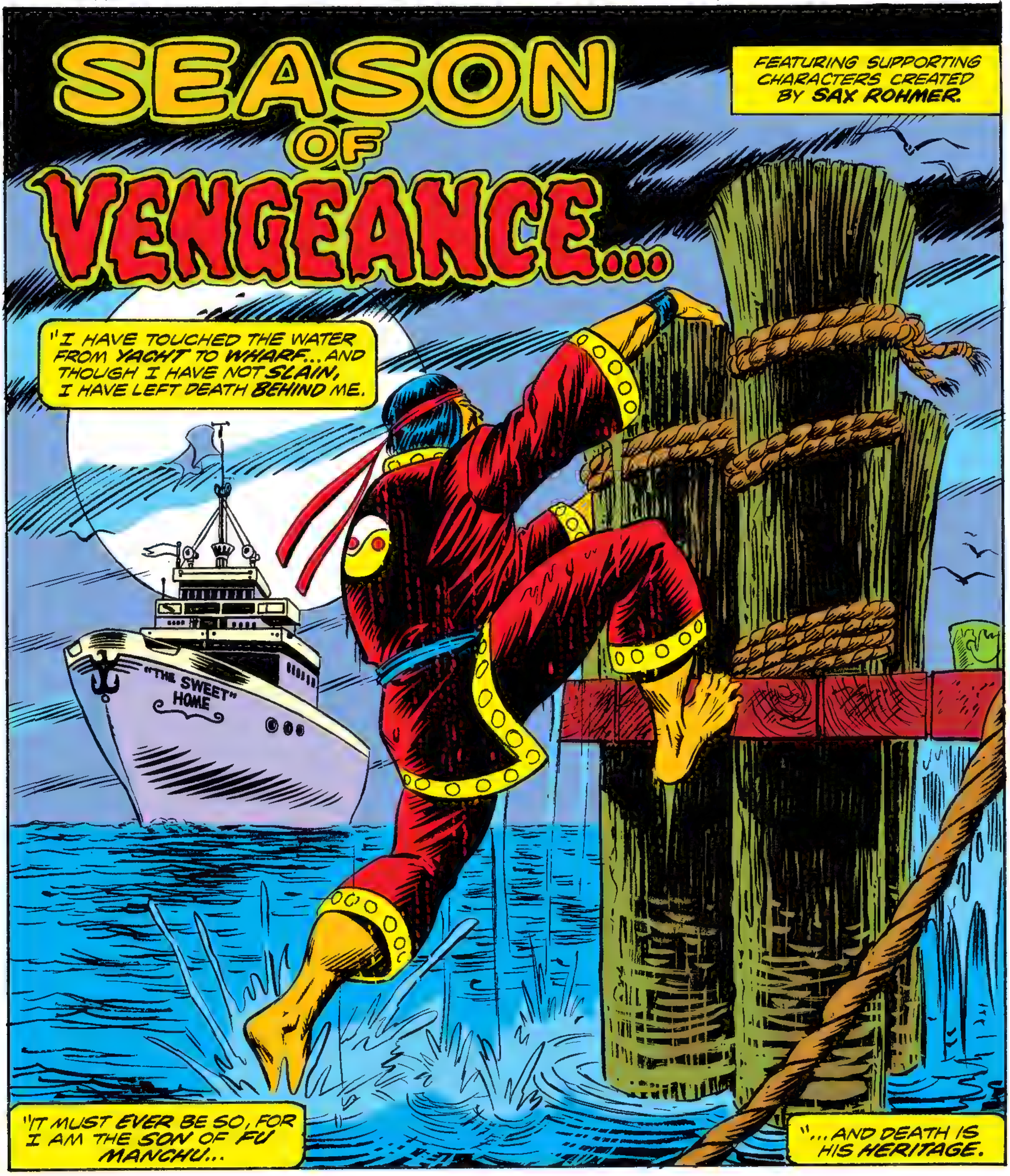
THE HANDS OF SHANG-CHI,
MASTER OF KUNG FU
™
™
SEASON OF VENGEANCE...
EAT COLD STEEL, PAJAMA-BOY!
NO! HE'S DEFLECTED IT--RIGHT BACK AT ME!!
...MOMENT OF DEATH!

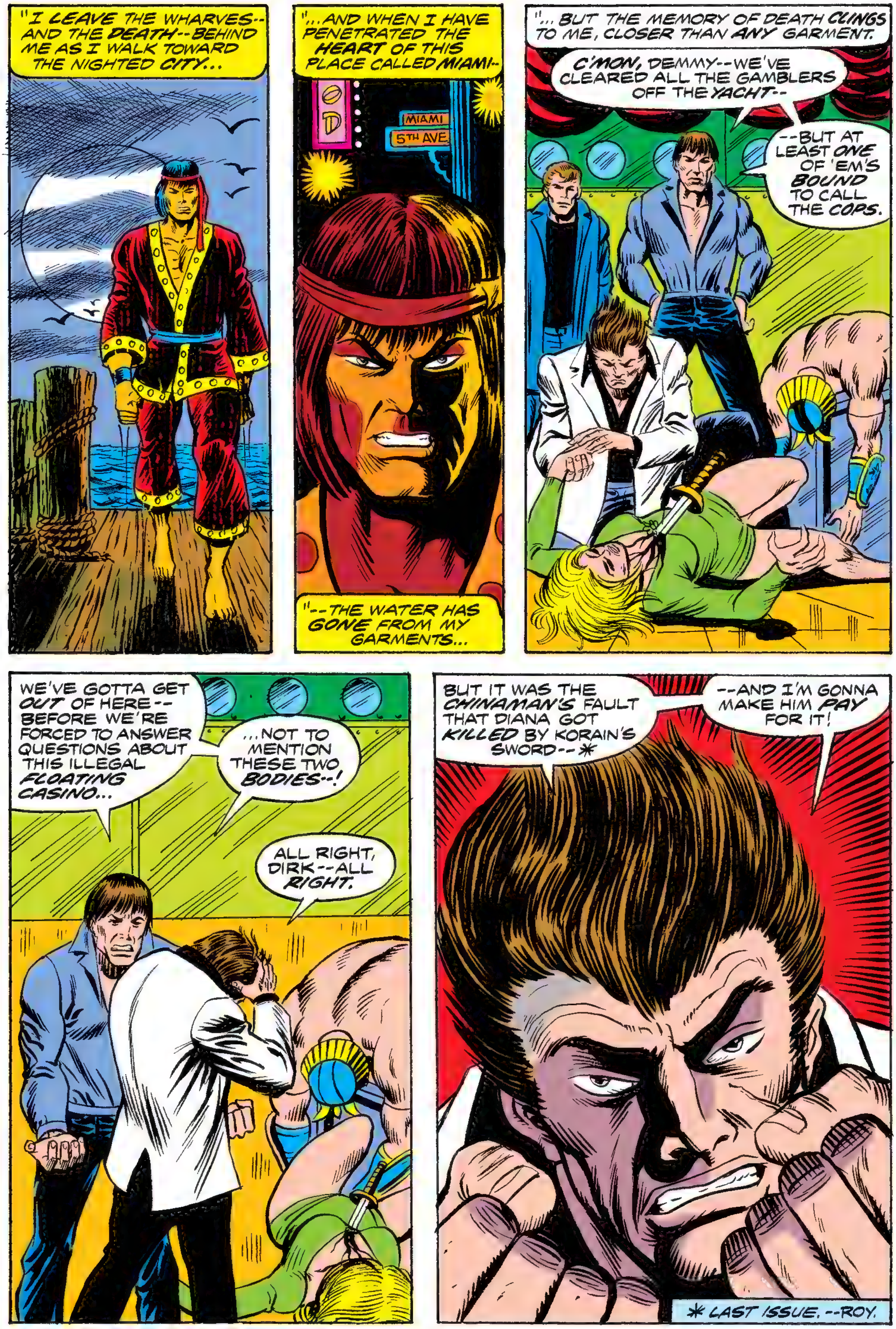
"Call me Shang-Chi, as my *father* did, when he raised me and molded my mind and my body in the vacuum of his Honan, China, retreat. I learned many things from my father: that my name means "The Rising and Advancing of a Spirit," that my body could be forged into a living weapon through the discipline of Kung Fu, and that it might be used for the murder of a man called Dr. Petrie.

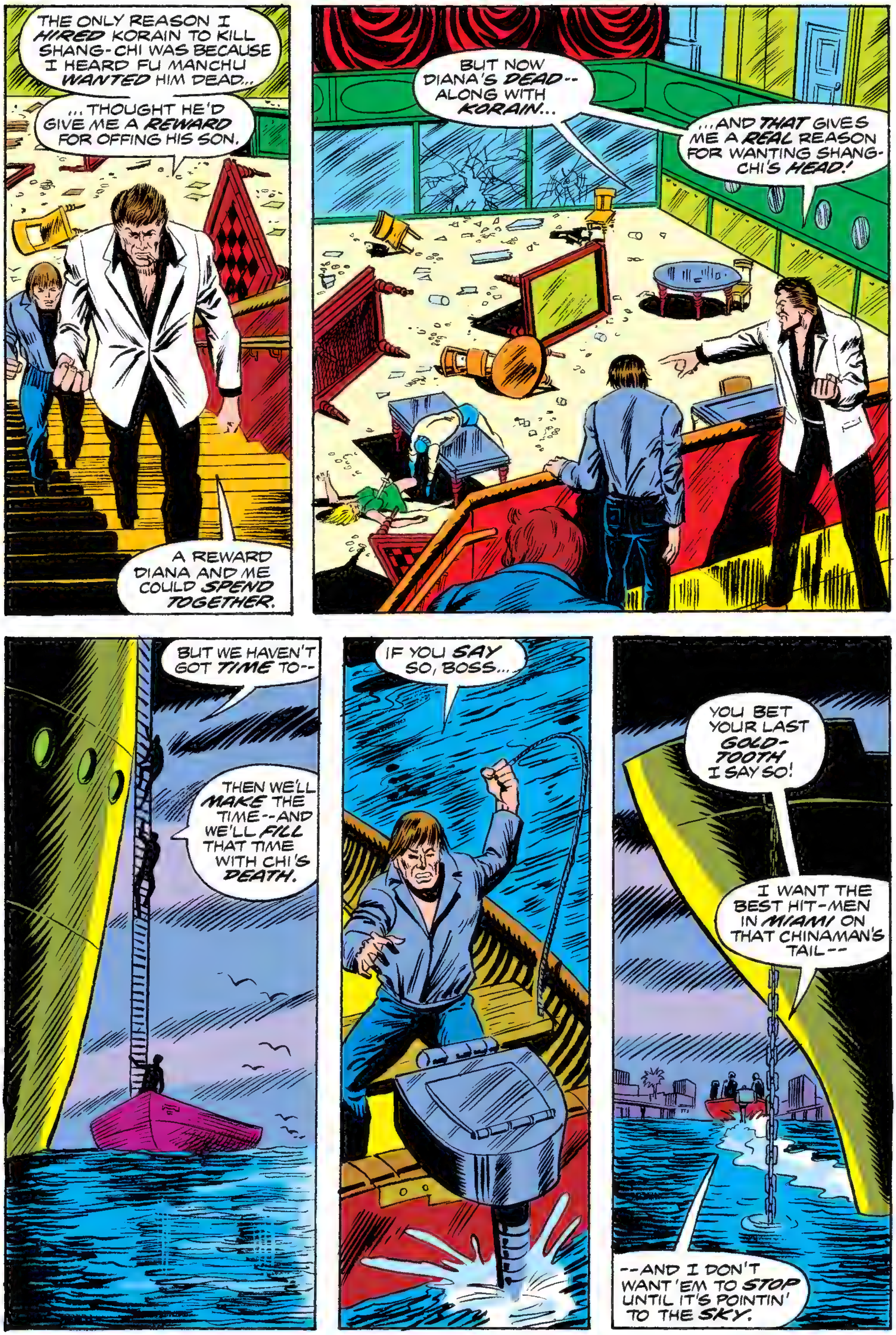
"Since then, I have learned that my father is **Dr. Fu Manchu,** the most insidiously evil man on earth... and that to *honor* him would bring nothing but *dishonor* to the spirit of my *name.*"

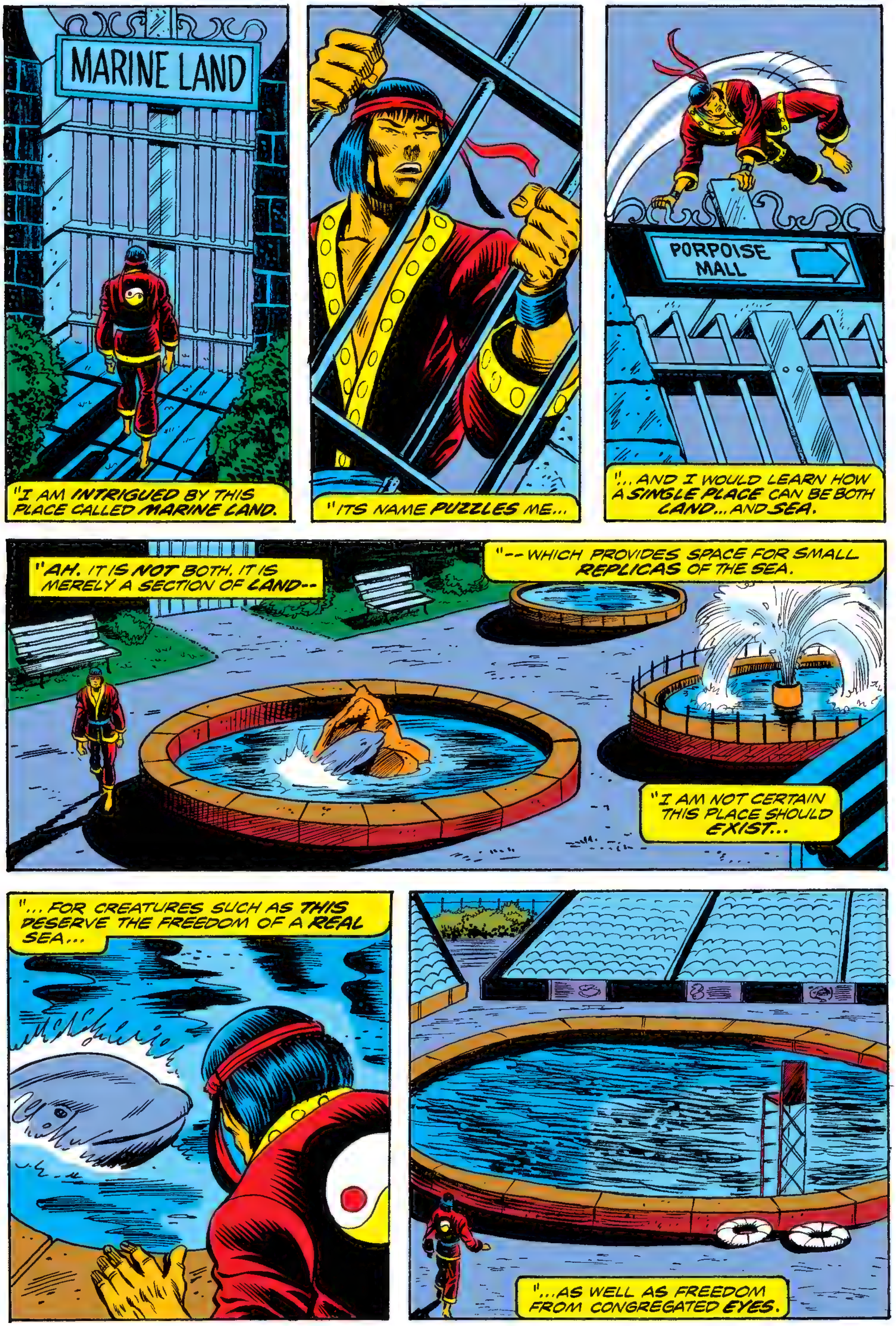
Stan Lee PRESENTS: MASTER OF KUNG FU!™

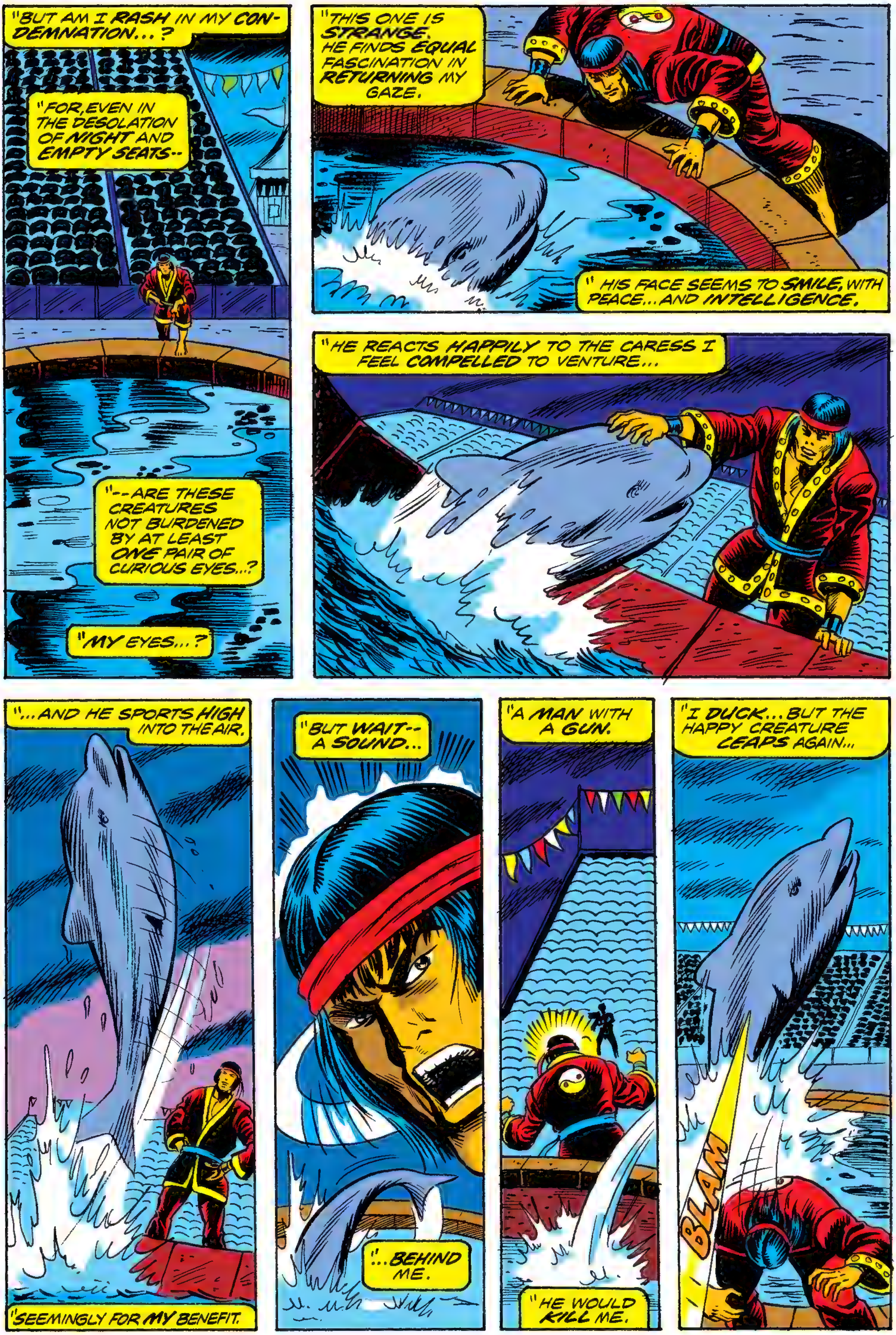
DOUG MOENCH WRITER
RON WILSON & AL MILGROM ARTISTS
JOHN COSTANZA, letterer
STAN GOLDBERG, colorist
ROY THOMAS EDITOR

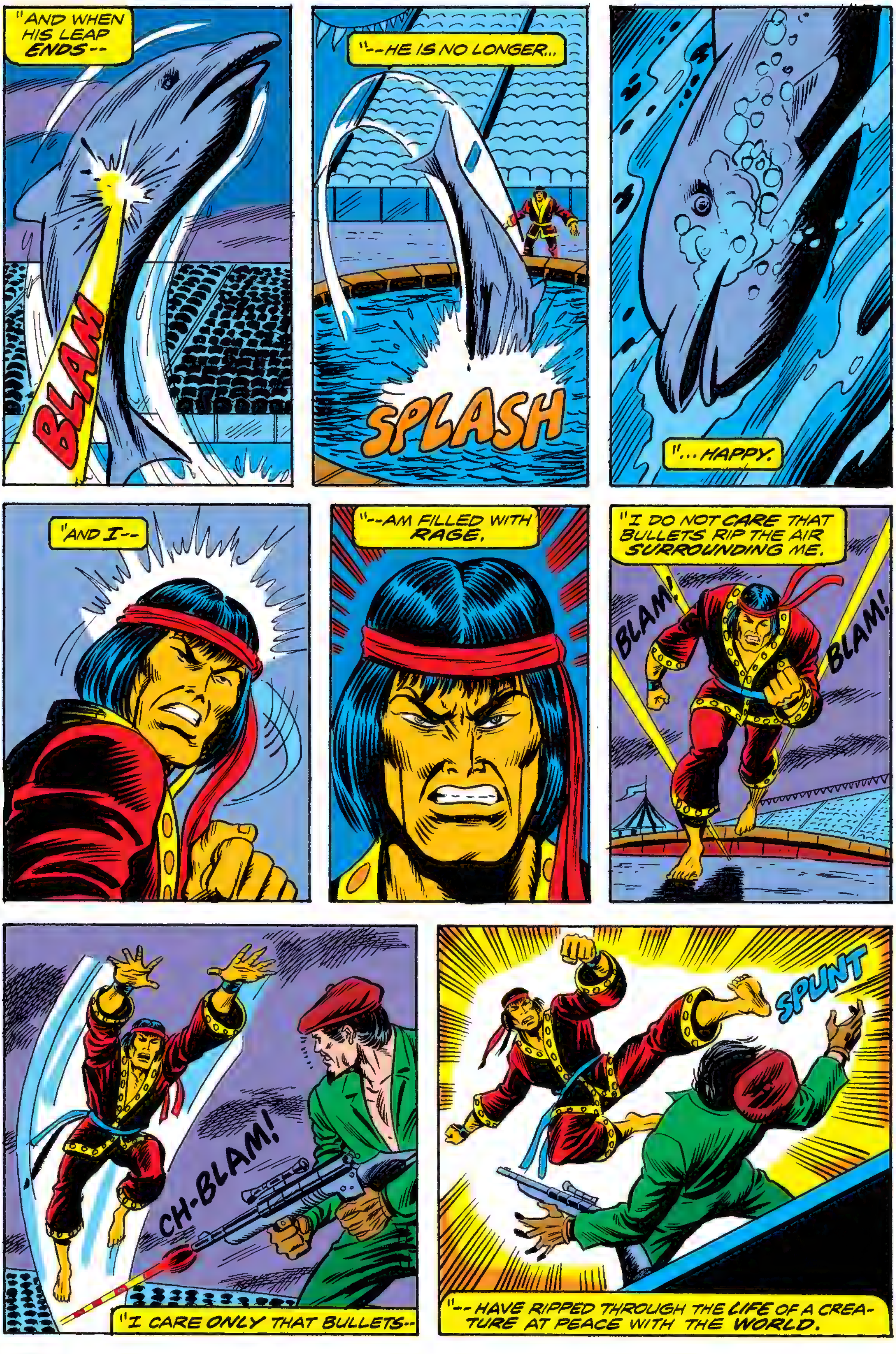

SEASON OF VENGEANCE...
FEATURING SUPPORTING CHARACTERS CREATED BY SAX ROHMER.
"I HAVE TOUCHED THE WATER FROM YACHT TO WHARF... AND THOUGH I HAVE NOT SLAIN, I HAVE LEFT DEATH BEHIND ME.
"THE SWEET" HOME
"IT MUST EVER BE SO, FOR I AM THE SON OF FU MANCHU...
"... AND DEATH IS HIS HERITAGE.

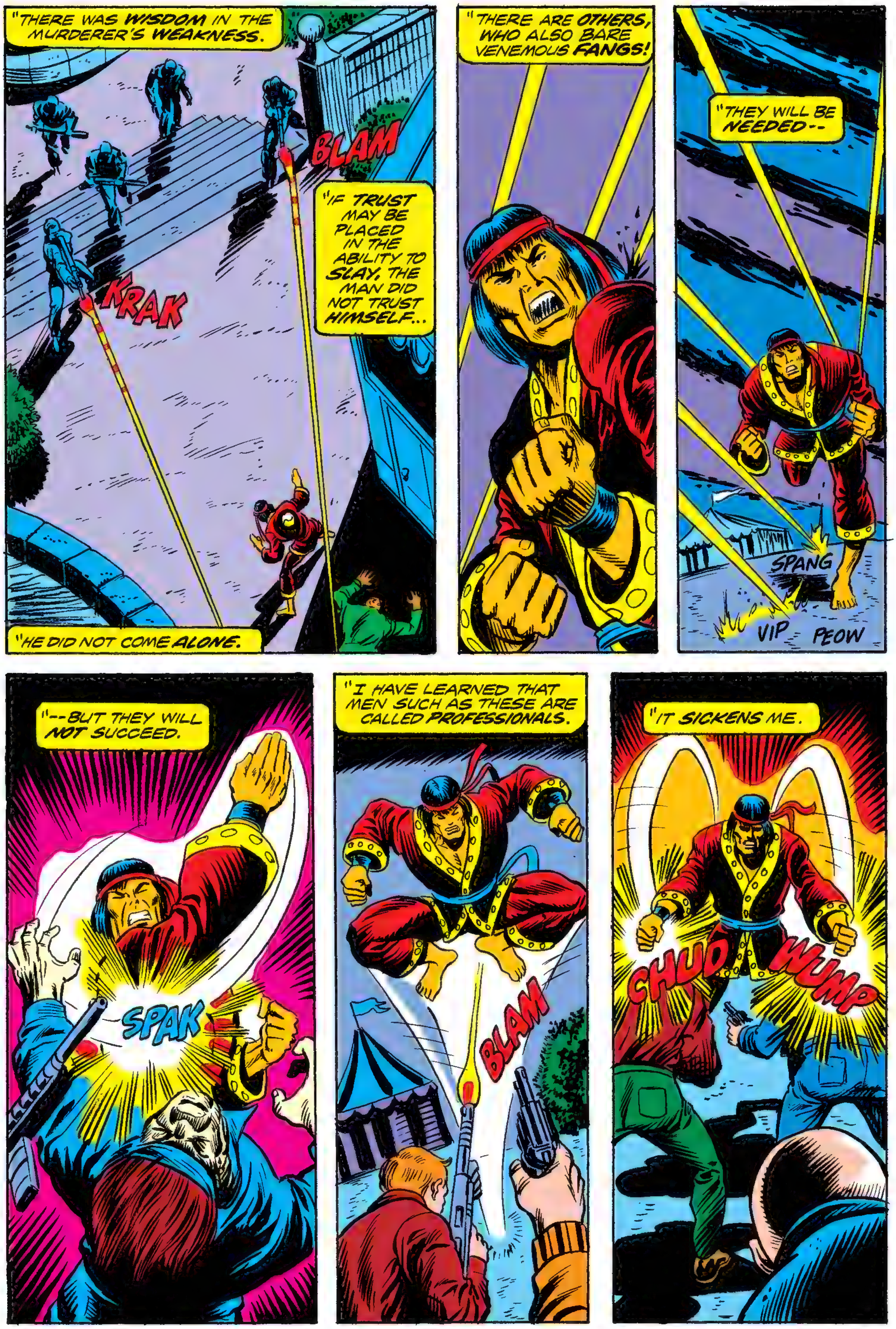

"I LEAVE THE WHARVES-- AND THE DEATH--BEHIND ME AS I WALK TOWARD THE NIGHTED CITY...
"...AND WHEN I HAVE PENETRATED THE HEART OF THIS PLACE CALLED MIAMI--
MIAMI
5TH AVE
"--THE WATER HAS GONE FROM MY GARMENTS...
"...BUT THE MEMORY OF DEATH CLINGS TO ME, CLOSER THAN ANY GARMENT.
C'MON, DEMMY--WE'VE CLEARED ALL THE GAMBLERS OFF THE YACHT--
--BUT AT LEAST ONE OF 'EM'S BOUND TO CALL THE COPS.
WE'VE GOTTA GET OUT OF HERE-- BEFORE WE'RE FORCED TO ANSWER QUESTIONS ABOUT THIS ILLEGAL FLOATING CASINO...
...NOT TO MENTION THESE TWO BODIES--!
ALL RIGHT, DIRK--ALL RIGHT.
BUT IT WAS THE CHINAMAN'S FAULT THAT DIANA GOT KILLED BY KORAIN'S SWORD--✱
--AND I'M GONNA MAKE HIM PAY FOR IT!
✱ LAST ISSUE. --ROY.

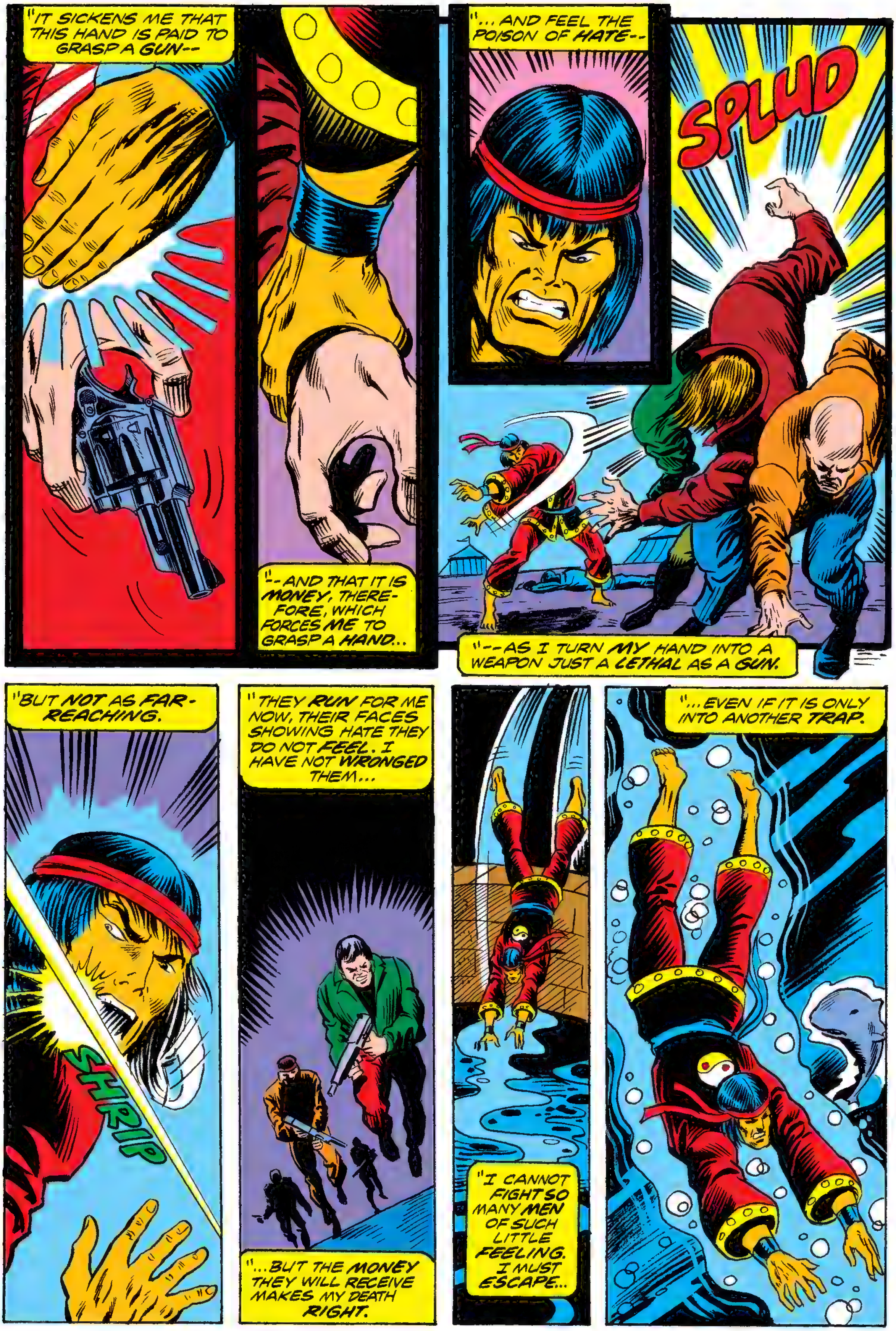

THE ONLY REASON I *HIRED* KORAIN TO KILL SHANG-CHI WAS BECAUSE I HEARD FU MANCHU *WANTED* HIM DEAD...
...THOUGHT HE'D GIVE ME A *REWARD* FOR OFFING HIS SON.
A REWARD DIANA AND ME COULD *SPEND TOGETHER*.
BUT NOW DIANA'S *DEAD*-- ALONG WITH *KORAIN*...
...AND *THAT* GIVES ME A *REAL* REASON FOR WANTING SHANG-CHI'S *HEAD!*
BUT WE HAVEN'T GOT *TIME* TO--
THEN WE'LL *MAKE* THE TIME--AND WE'LL *FILL* THAT TIME WITH CHI'S *DEATH*.
IF YOU *SAY* SO, BOSS...
YOU BET YOUR LAST *GOLD-TOOTH* I SAY SO!
I WANT THE BEST HIT-MEN IN *MIAMI* ON THAT CHINAMAN'S TAIL--
--AND I DON'T WANT 'EM TO *STOP* UNTIL IT'S POINTIN' TO THE *SKY*.


MARINE LAND
"I AM **INTRIGUED** BY THIS PLACE CALLED **MARINE LAND**.
"ITS NAME **PUZZLES** ME...
PORPOISE MALL
"...AND I WOULD LEARN HOW A **SINGLE PLACE** CAN BE BOTH **LAND**...AND **SEA**.
"**AH.** IT IS **NOT** BOTH. IT IS MERELY A SECTION OF **LAND**--
"--WHICH PROVIDES SPACE FOR SMALL **REPLICAS** OF THE SEA.
"I AM NOT CERTAIN THIS PLACE SHOULD **EXIST**...
"...FOR CREATURES SUCH AS **THIS** DESERVE THE FREEDOM OF A **REAL** SEA...
"...AS WELL AS FREEDOM FROM CONGREGATED **EYES**.

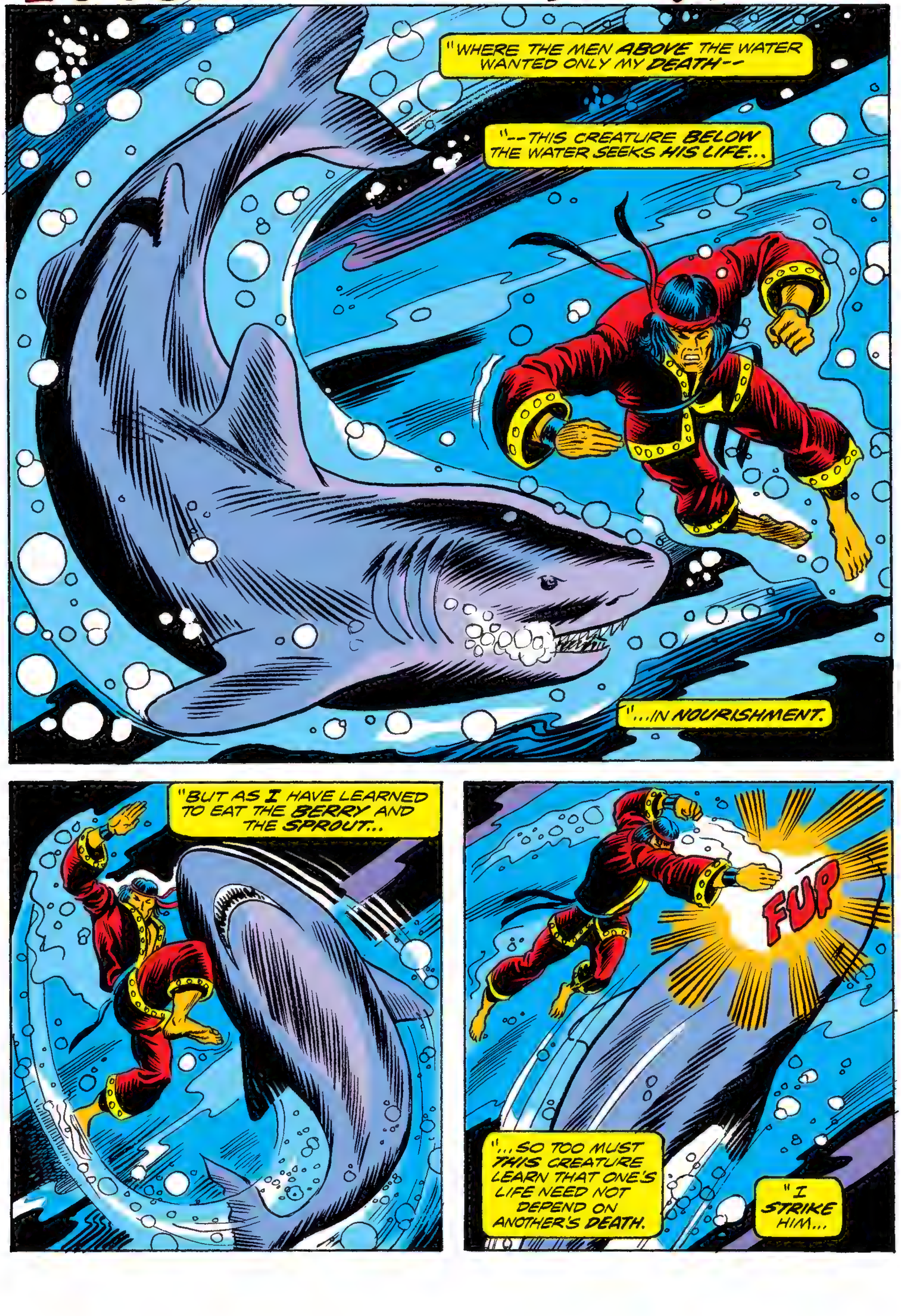

"BUT AM I RASH IN MY CONDEMNATION...?
"FOR, EVEN IN THE DESOLATION OF NIGHT AND EMPTY SEATS--
"--ARE THESE CREATURES NOT BURDENED BY AT LEAST ONE PAIR OF CURIOUS EYES...?
"MY EYES...?
"THIS ONE IS STRANGE. HE FINDS EQUAL FASCINATION IN RETURNING MY GAZE.
" HIS FACE SEEMS TO SMILE, WITH PEACE... AND INTELLIGENCE.
"HE REACTS HAPPILY TO THE CARESS I FEEL COMPELLED TO VENTURE...
"...AND HE SPORTS HIGH INTO THE AIR,
"SEEMINGLY FOR MY BENEFIT.
"BUT WAIT-- A SOUND...
"...BEHIND ME.
"A MAN WITH A GUN.
"HE WOULD KILL ME.
"I DUCK... BUT THE HAPPY CREATURE LEAPS AGAIN...
BLAM

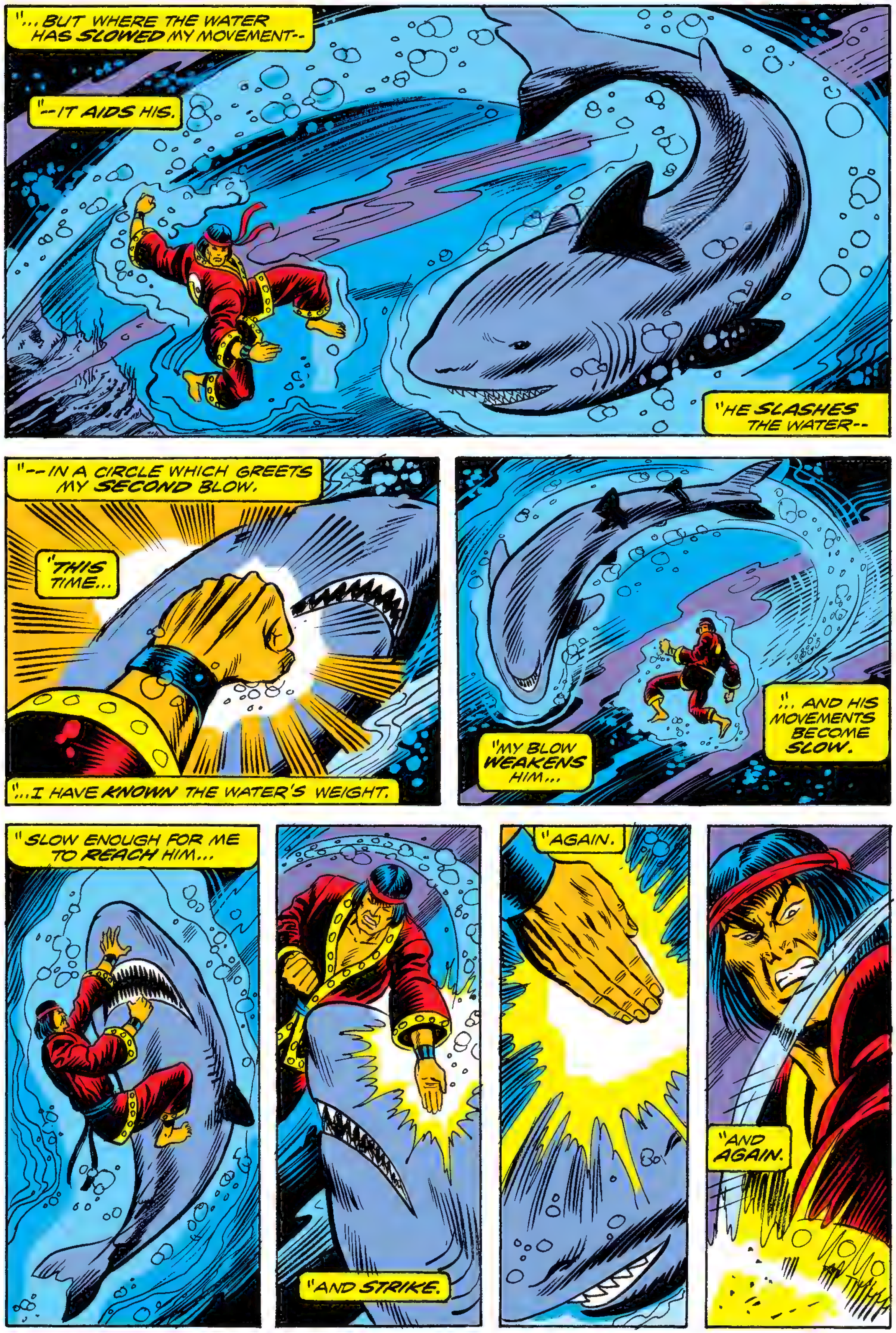

"AND WHEN HIS LEAP ENDS--
BLAM
"--HE IS NO LONGER...
SPLASH
"...HAPPY.
"AND I--
"--AM FILLED WITH RAGE.
"I DO NOT CARE THAT BULLETS RIP THE AIR SURROUNDING ME.
BLAM!
BLAM!
CH-BLAM!
"I CARE ONLY THAT BULLETS--
SPUNT
"--HAVE RIPPED THROUGH THE LIFE OF A CREATURE AT PEACE WITH THE WORLD.

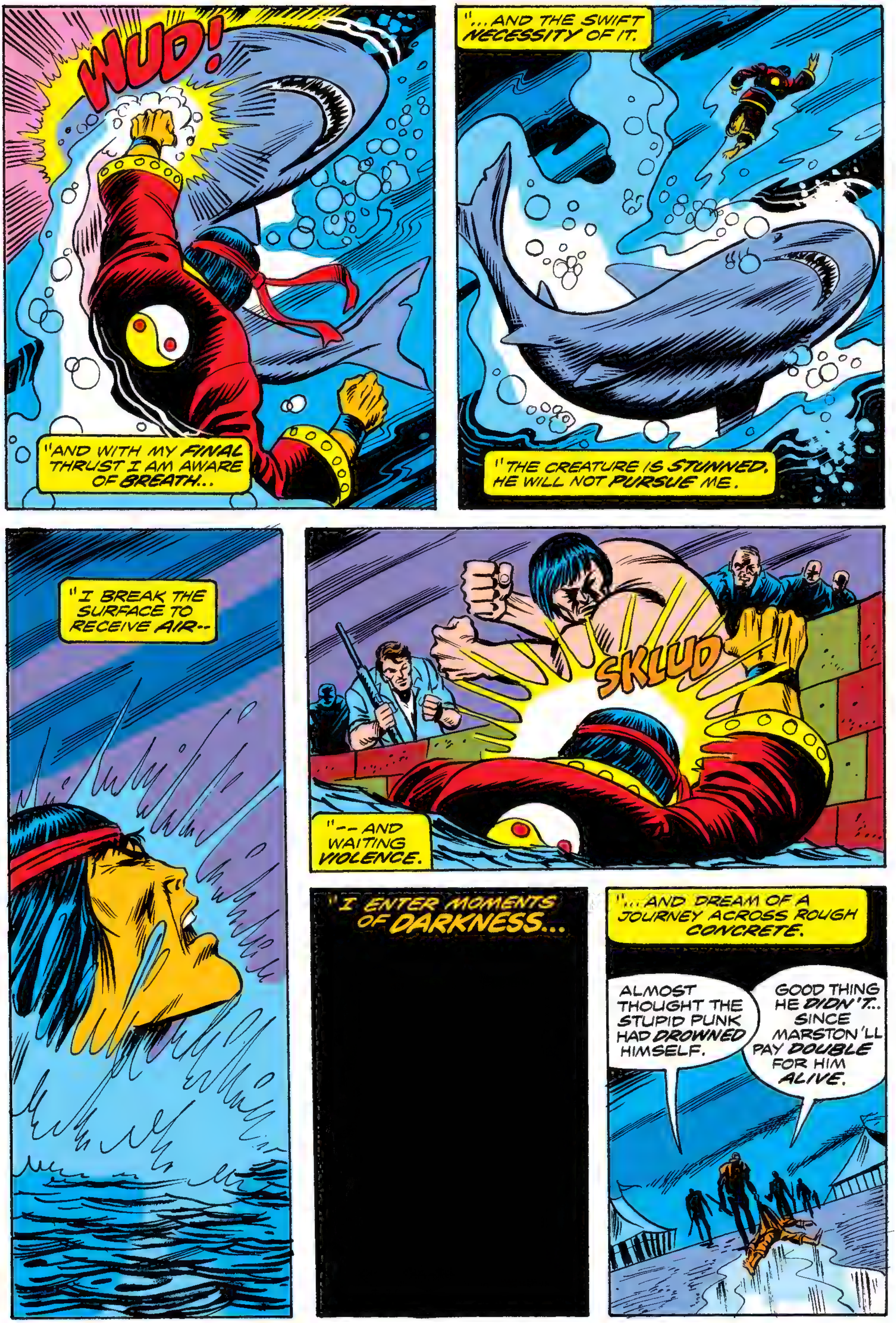

"THERE WAS WISDOM IN THE MURDERER'S WEAKNESS.
BLAM
"IF TRUST MAY BE PLACED IN THE ABILITY TO SLAY, THE MAN DID NOT TRUST HIMSELF...
KRAK
"HE DID NOT COME ALONE.
"THERE ARE OTHERS, WHO ALSO BARE VENEMOUS FANGS!
"THEY WILL BE NEEDED--
SPANG
VIP
PEOW
"--BUT THEY WILL NOT SUCCEED.
SPAK
"I HAVE LEARNED THAT MEN SUCH AS THESE ARE CALLED PROFESSIONALS.
BLAM
"IT SICKENS ME.
CHUD
WUMP

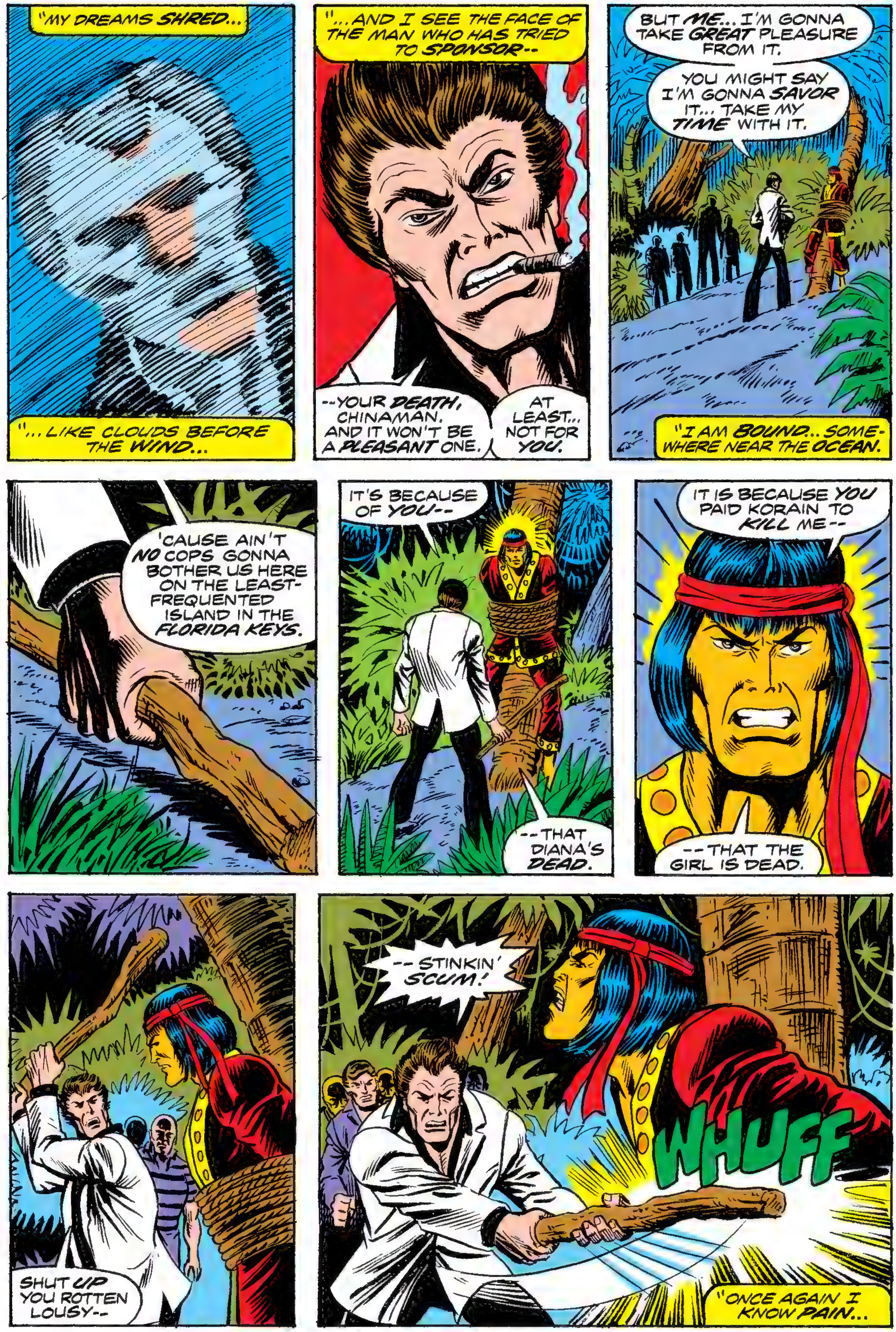

"IT SICKENS ME THAT THIS HAND IS PAID TO GRASP A GUN--
"--AND THAT IT IS MONEY, THEREFORE, WHICH FORCES ME TO GRASP A HAND...
"... AND FEEL THE POISON OF HATE--
SPLUD
"--AS I TURN MY HAND INTO A WEAPON JUST A LETHAL AS A GUN.
"BUT NOT AS FAR-REACHING.
SHRIP
"THEY RUN FOR ME NOW, THEIR FACES SHOWING HATE THEY DO NOT FEEL. I HAVE NOT WRONGED THEM...
"...BUT THE MONEY THEY WILL RECEIVE MAKES MY DEATH RIGHT.
"I CANNOT FIGHT SO MANY MEN OF SUCH LITTLE FEELING. I MUST ESCAPE...
"...EVEN IF IT IS ONLY INTO ANOTHER TRAP.

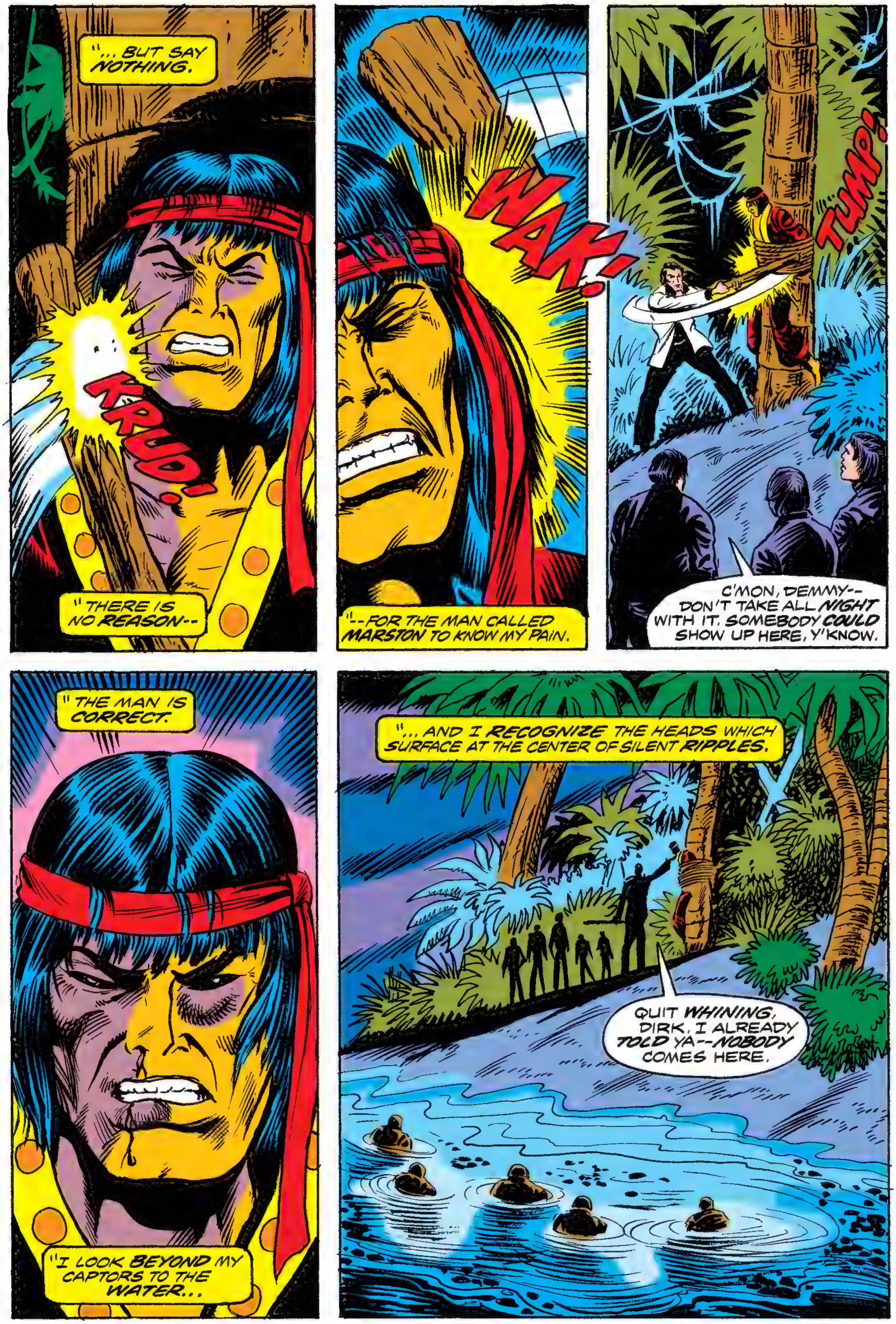
PART 2 MOMENT OF DEATH!

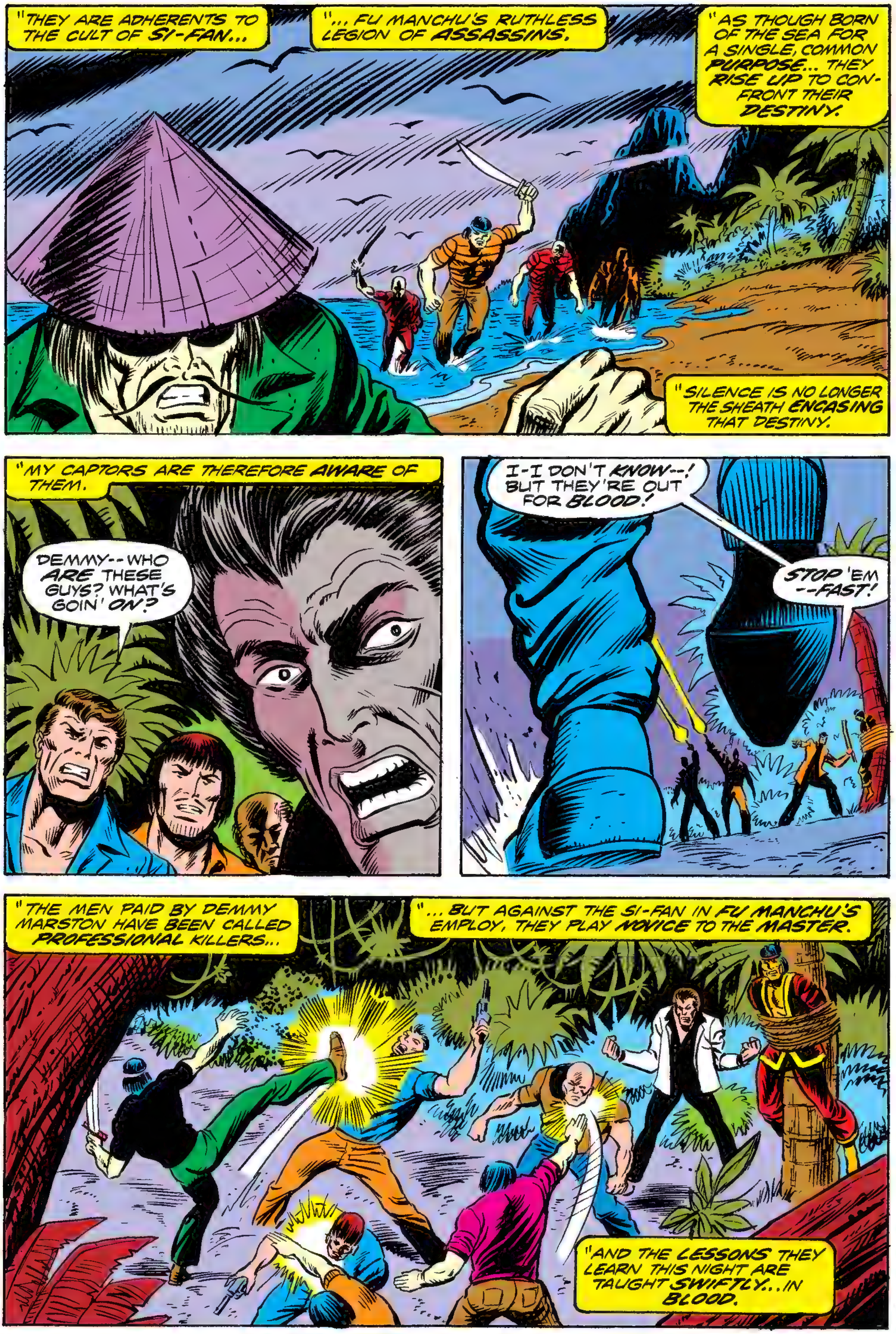

"WHERE THE MEN ABOVE THE WATER WANTED ONLY MY DEATH--
"--THIS CREATURE BELOW THE WATER SEEKS HIS LIFE...
"...IN NOURISHMENT.
"BUT AS I HAVE LEARNED TO EAT THE BERRY AND THE SPROUT...
"...SO TOO MUST THIS CREATURE LEARN THAT ONE'S LIFE NEED NOT DEPEND ON ANOTHER'S DEATH.
FUP
"I STRIKE HIM...

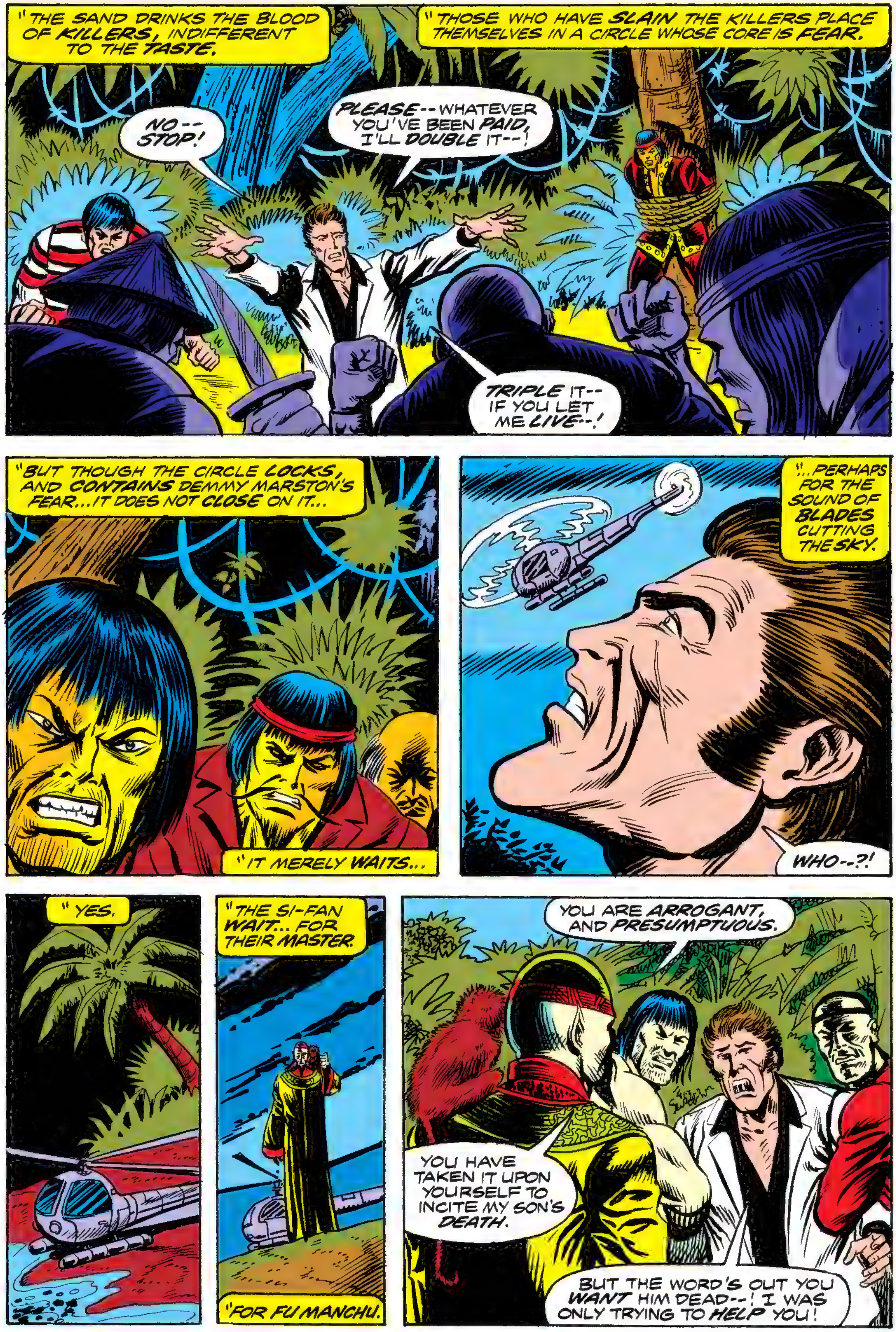

"...BUT WHERE THE WATER HAS SLOWED MY MOVEMENT--
"--IT AIDS HIS.
"HE SLASHES THE WATER--
"--IN A CIRCLE WHICH GREETS MY SECOND BLOW.
"THIS TIME...
"...I HAVE KNOWN THE WATER'S WEIGHT.
"MY BLOW WEAKENS HIM...
"...AND HIS MOVEMENTS BECOME SLOW.
"SLOW ENOUGH FOR ME TO REACH HIM...
"AND STRIKE.
"AGAIN.
"AND AGAIN.

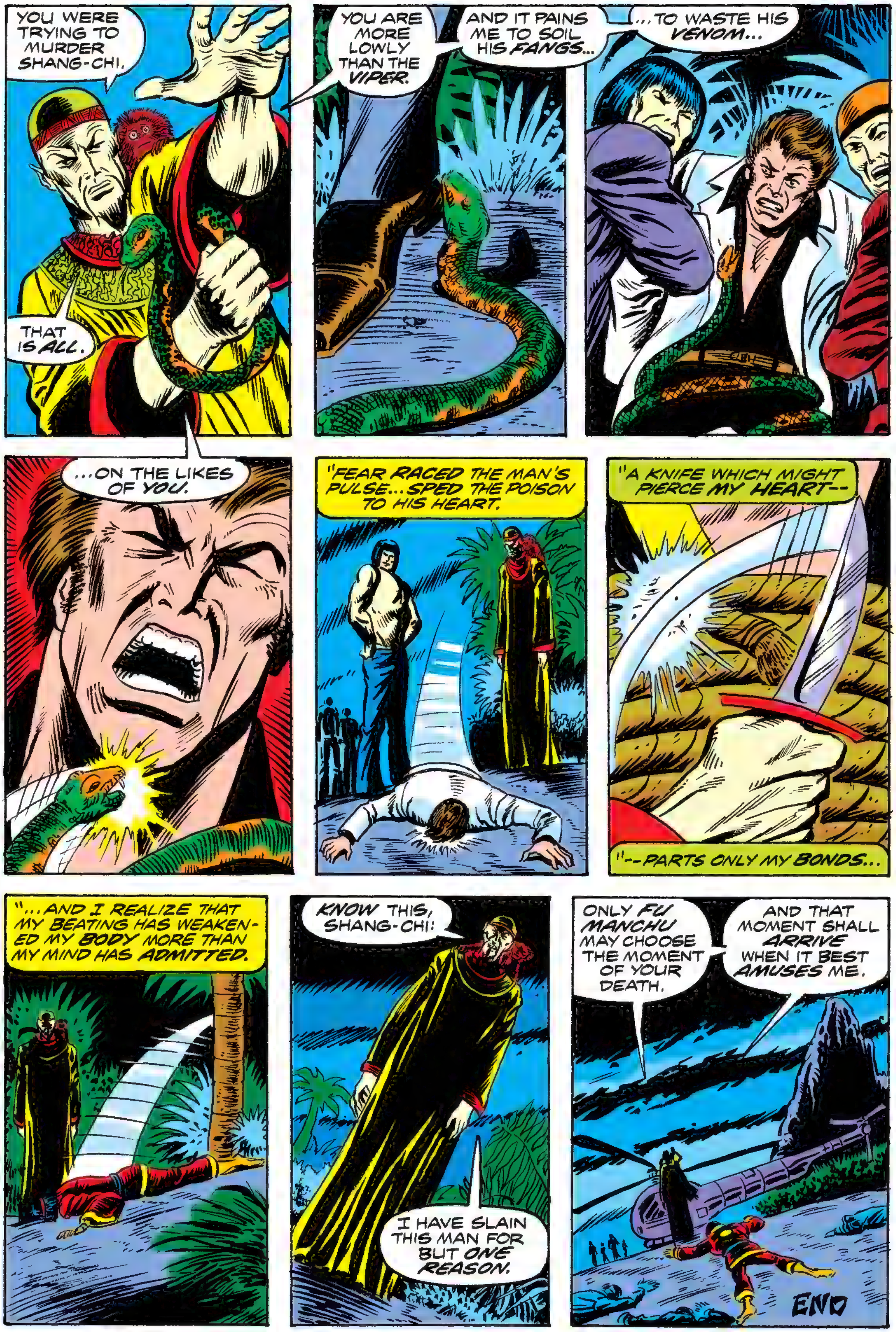

WUD!
"AND WITH MY FINAL THRUST I AM AWARE OF BREATH...
"...AND THE SWIFT NECESSITY OF IT.
"THE CREATURE IS STUNNED. HE WILL NOT PURSUE ME.
"I BREAK THE SURFACE TO RECEIVE AIR--
SKLUD
"-- AND WAITING VIOLENCE.
"I ENTER MOMENTS OF DARKNESS...
"...AND DREAM OF A JOURNEY ACROSS ROUGH CONCRETE.
ALMOST THOUGHT THE STUPID PUNK HAD DROWNED HIMSELF.
GOOD THING HE DIDN'T.. SINCE MARSTON'LL PAY DOUBLE FOR HIM ALIVE.

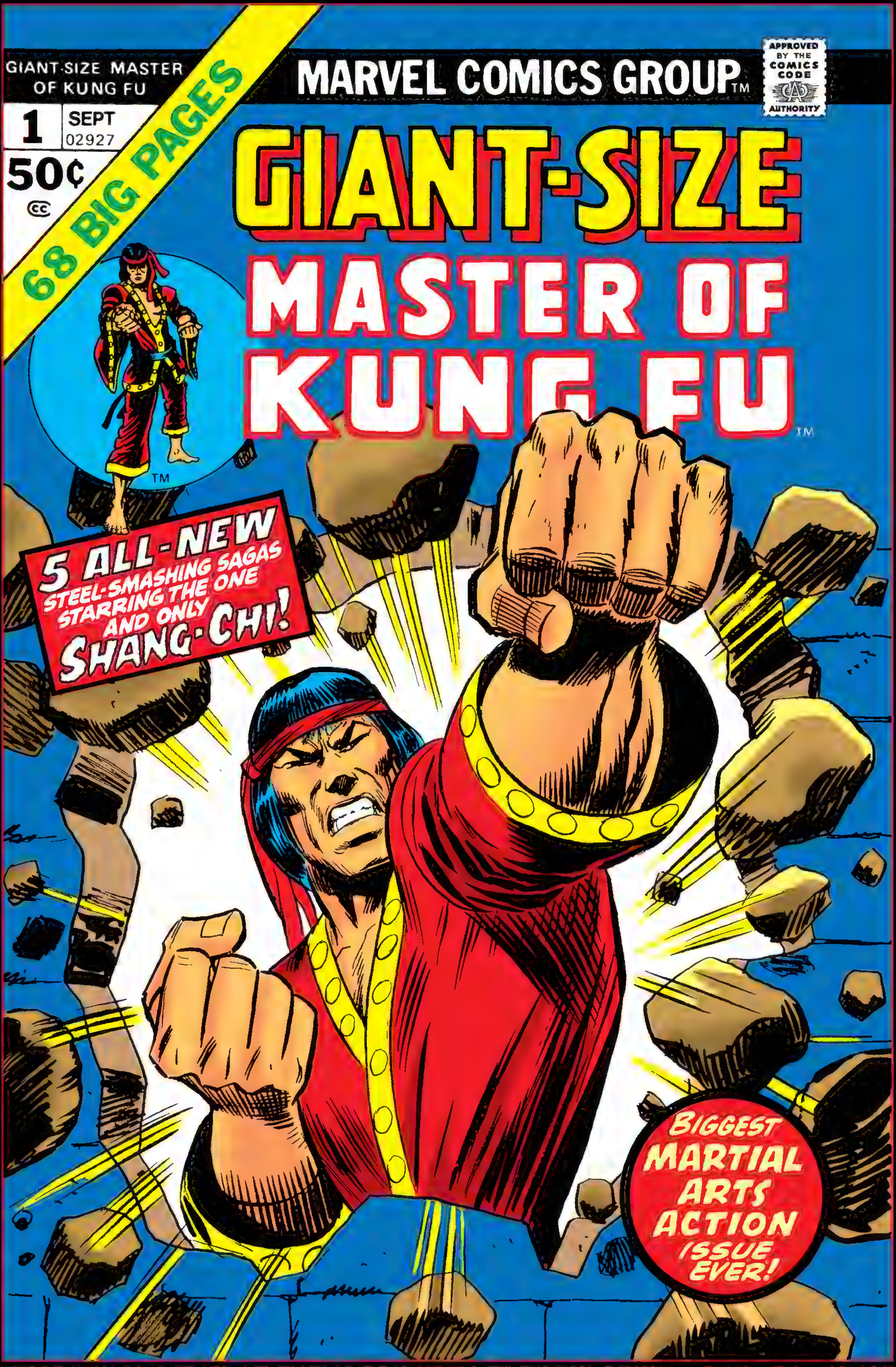

"MY DREAMS *SHRED*...
"...LIKE CLOUDS BEFORE THE *WIND*...
"...AND I SEE THE FACE OF THE MAN WHO HAS TRIED TO *SPONSOR*--
--YOUR *DEATH*, CHINAMAN. AND IT WON'T BE A *PLEASANT* ONE.
AT LEAST... NOT FOR *YOU*.
BUT *ME*... I'M GONNA TAKE *GREAT* PLEASURE FROM IT.
YOU MIGHT SAY I'M GONNA *SAVOR* IT... TAKE MY *TIME* WITH IT.
"I AM *BOUND*... SOMEWHERE NEAR THE *OCEAN*.
'CAUSE AIN'T *NO* COPS GONNA BOTHER US HERE ON THE LEAST-FREQUENTED ISLAND IN THE *FLORIDA KEYS*.
IT'S BECAUSE OF *YOU*--
--THAT DIANA'S *DEAD*.
IT IS BECAUSE *YOU* PAID KORAIN TO *KILL* ME--
--THAT THE GIRL IS DEAD.
SHUT *UP* YOU ROTTEN LOUSY--
--STINKIN' *SCUM*!
WHUFF
"ONCE AGAIN I KNOW *PAIN*...


"...BUT SAY NOTHING.
KRUD!
"THERE IS NO REASON--
WAK!
"--FOR THE MAN CALLED MARSTON TO KNOW MY PAIN.
TUMP!
C'MON, DEMMY-- DON'T TAKE ALL NIGHT WITH IT. SOMEBODY COULD SHOW UP HERE, Y'KNOW.
"THE MAN IS CORRECT.
"I LOOK BEYOND MY CAPTORS TO THE WATER...
"...AND I RECOGNIZE THE HEADS WHICH SURFACE AT THE CENTER OF SILENT RIPPLES.
QUIT WHINING, DIRK. I ALREADY TOLD YA--NOBODY COMES HERE.


"THEY ARE ADHERENTS TO THE CULT OF SI-FAN...
"... FU MANCHU'S RUTHLESS LEGION OF ASSASSINS.
"AS THOUGH BORN OF THE SEA FOR A SINGLE, COMMON PURPOSE... THEY RISE UP TO CONFRONT THEIR DESTINY.
"SILENCE IS NO LONGER THE SHEATH ENCASING THAT DESTINY.
"MY CAPTORS ARE THEREFORE AWARE OF THEM.
DEMMY--WHO ARE THESE GUYS? WHAT'S GOIN' ON?
I-I DON'T KNOW--! BUT THEY'RE OUT FOR BLOOD!
STOP 'EM --FAST!
"THE MEN PAID BY DEMMY MARSTON HAVE BEEN CALLED PROFESSIONAL KILLERS...
"... BUT AGAINST THE SI-FAN IN FU MANCHU'S EMPLOY, THEY PLAY NOVICE TO THE MASTER.
"AND THE LESSONS THEY LEARN THIS NIGHT ARE TAUGHT SWIFTLY... IN BLOOD.


"THE SAND DRINKS THE BLOOD OF KILLERS, INDIFFERENT TO THE TASTE.
"THOSE WHO HAVE SLAIN THE KILLERS PLACE THEMSELVES IN A CIRCLE WHOSE CORE IS FEAR.
NO-- STOP!
PLEASE--WHATEVER YOU'VE BEEN PAID, I'LL DOUBLE IT--!
TRIPLE IT-- IF YOU LET ME LIVE--!
"BUT THOUGH THE CIRCLE LOCKS, AND CONTAINS DEMMY MARSTON'S FEAR...IT DOES NOT CLOSE ON IT...
"IT MERELY WAITS...
"...PERHAPS FOR THE SOUND OF BLADES CUTTING THE SKY.
WHO--?!
"YES.
"THE SI-FAN WAIT... FOR THEIR MASTER.
"FOR FU MANCHU.
YOU ARE ARROGANT, AND PRESUMPTUOUS.
YOU HAVE TAKEN IT UPON YOURSELF TO INCITE MY SON'S DEATH.
BUT THE WORD'S OUT YOU WANT HIM DEAD--! I WAS ONLY TRYING TO HELP YOU!


YOU WERE TRYING TO MURDER SHANG-CHI.
THAT IS *ALL*.
YOU ARE MORE LOWLY THAN THE *VIPER*.
AND IT PAINS ME TO SOIL HIS *FANGS*...
...TO WASTE HIS *VENOM*...
...ON THE LIKES OF *YOU*.
"FEAR *RACED* THE MAN'S PULSE... *SPED* THE POISON TO HIS HEART.
"A KNIFE WHICH *MIGHT* PIERCE *MY HEART*--
"--PARTS ONLY MY *BONDS*...
"...AND I REALIZE THAT MY BEATING HAS WEAKENED MY *BODY* MORE THAN MY MIND HAS *ADMITTED*.
KNOW THIS, SHANG-CHI:
I HAVE SLAIN THIS MAN FOR BUT *ONE* REASON.
ONLY *FU MANCHU* MAY CHOOSE THE MOMENT OF YOUR DEATH.
AND THAT MOMENT SHALL *ARRIVE* WHEN IT BEST *AMUSES* ME.
END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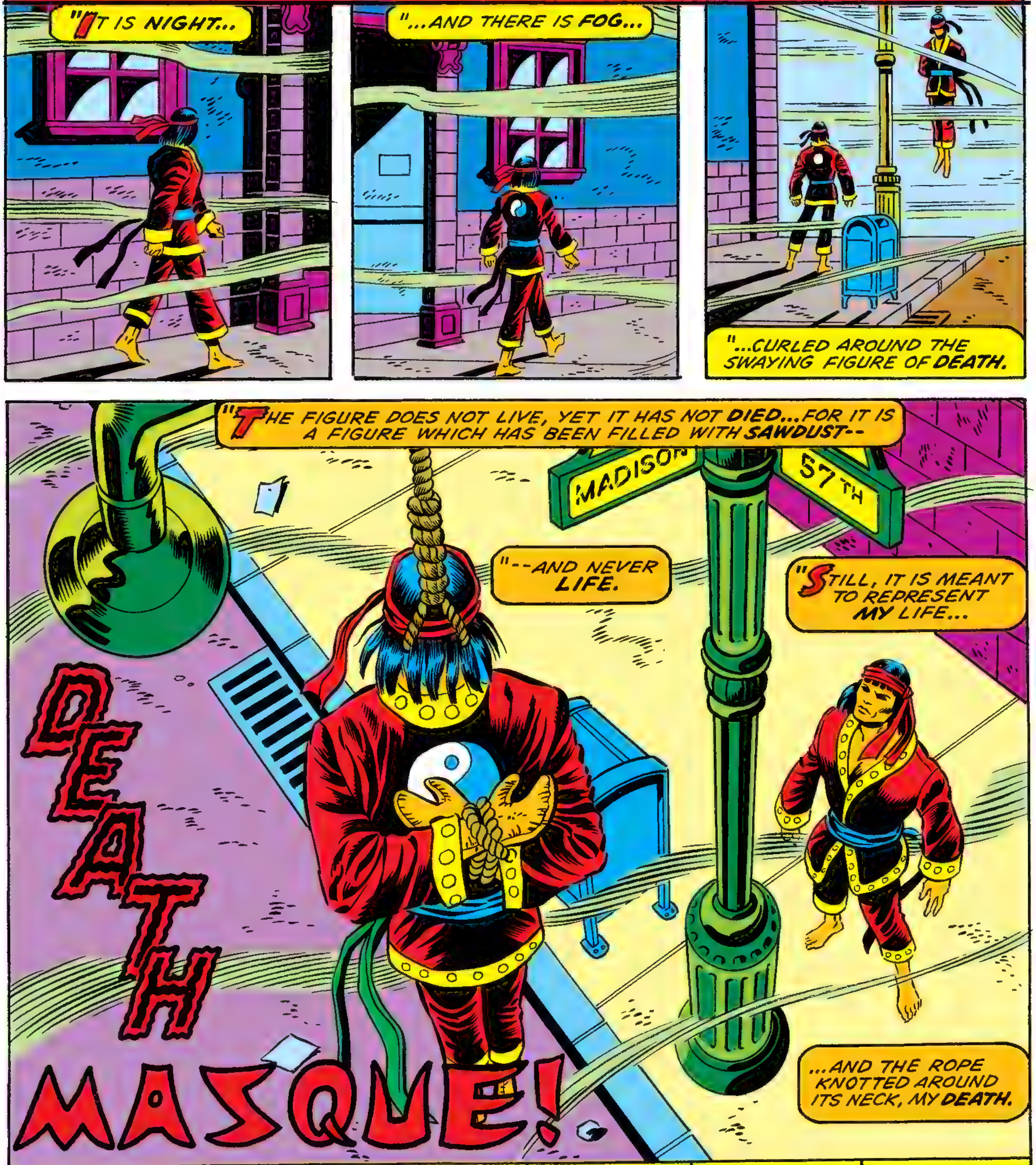
5 ALL-NEW STEEL-SMASHING SAGAS STARRING THE ONE AND ONLY SHANG-CHI!
BIGGEST MARTIAL ARTS ACTION ISSUE EVER!

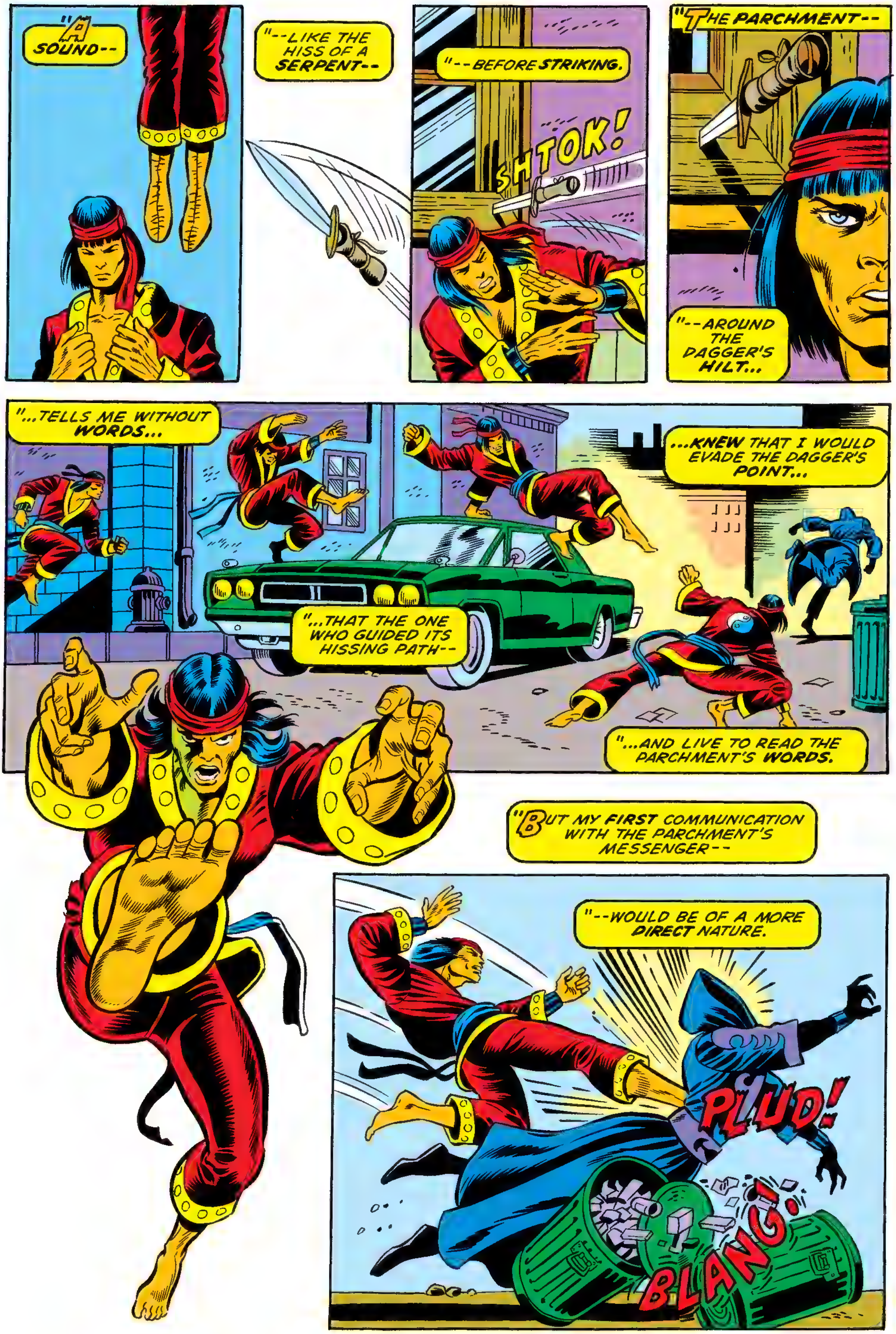
"Call me Shang-Chi, as my *father* did, when he raised me and molded my mind and my body in the vacuum of his Honan, China retreat. I learned many things from my father: That my name means "The Rising and Advancing of a Spirit," that my body could be forged into a living weapon through the discipline of kung fu, and that it might be used for the murder of a man called Dr. Petrie.

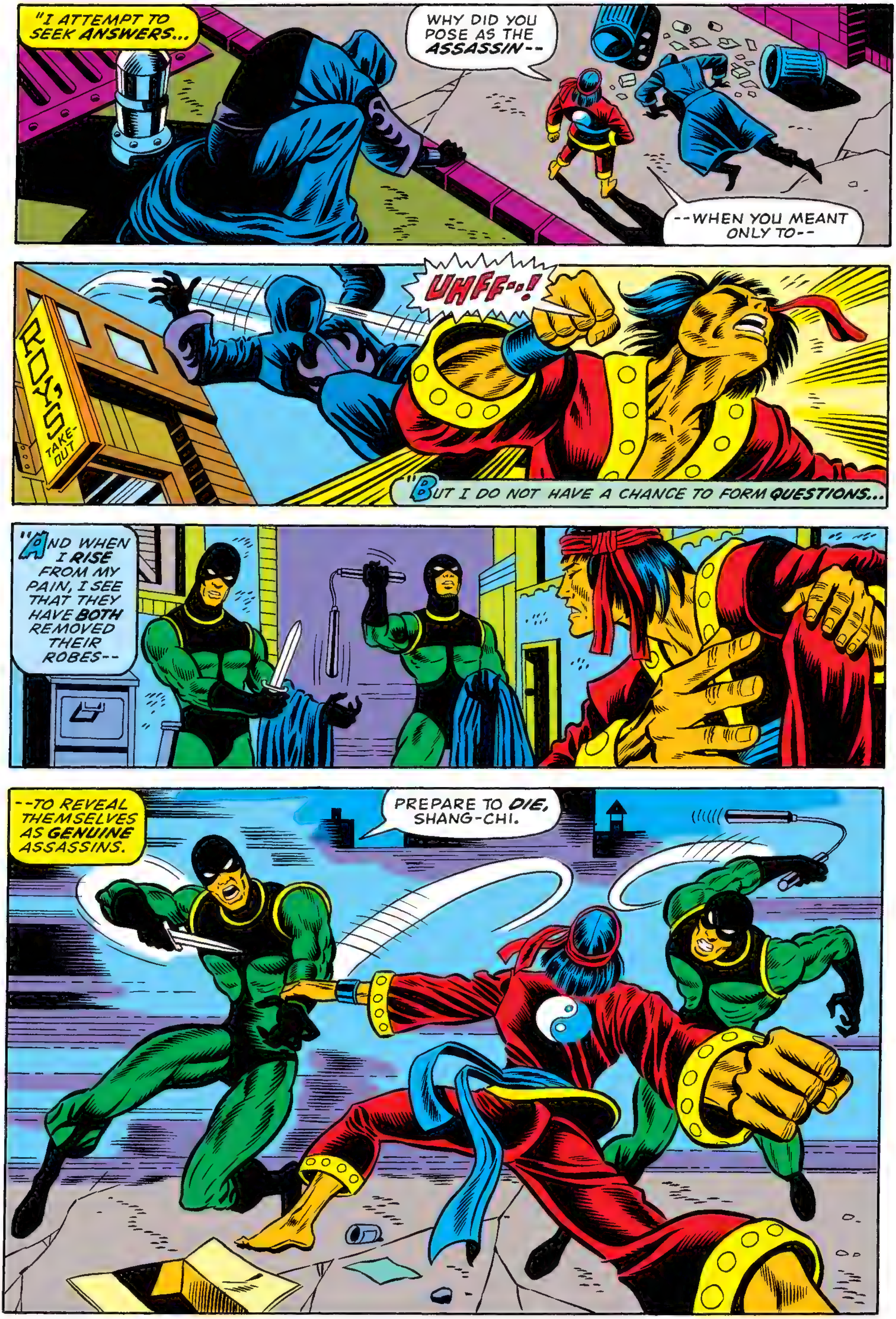
"Since then, I have learned that my father is **Dr. Fu Manchu** the most insidiously evil man on earth... and that to *honor* him would bring nothing but *dishonor* to the spirit of my *name*."

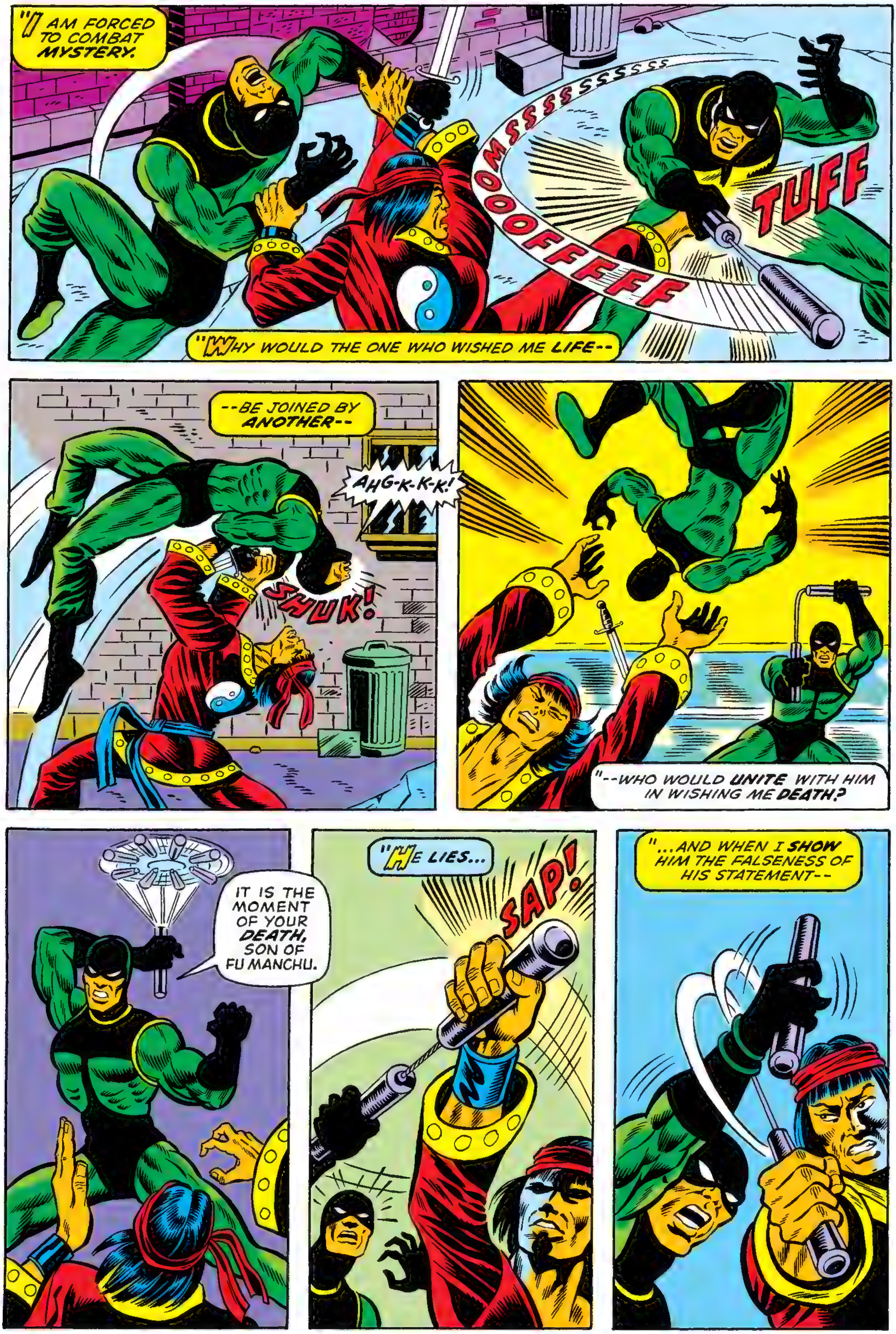
Stan Lee PRESENTS: MASTER OF KUNG FU!™

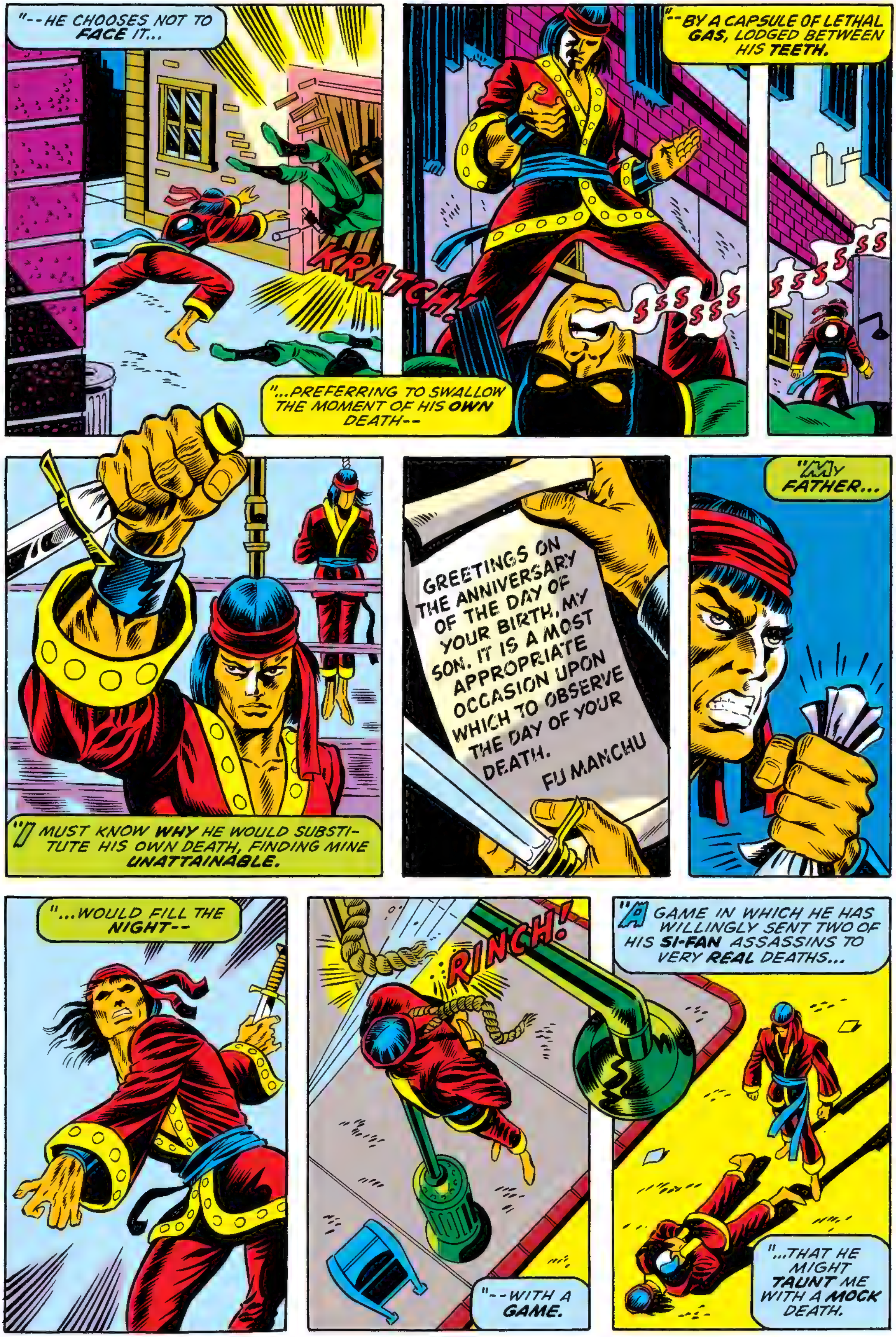

"IT IS NIGHT...
"...AND THERE IS FOG...
"...CURLED AROUND THE SWAYING FIGURE OF DEATH.
"THE FIGURE DOES NOT LIVE, YET IT HAS NOT DIED...FOR IT IS A FIGURE WHICH HAS BEEN FILLED WITH SAWDUST--
MADISON
57TH
"--AND NEVER LIFE.
"STILL, IT IS MEANT TO REPRESENT MY LIFE...
DEATH MASQUE!
...AND THE ROPE KNOTTED AROUND ITS NECK, MY DEATH.

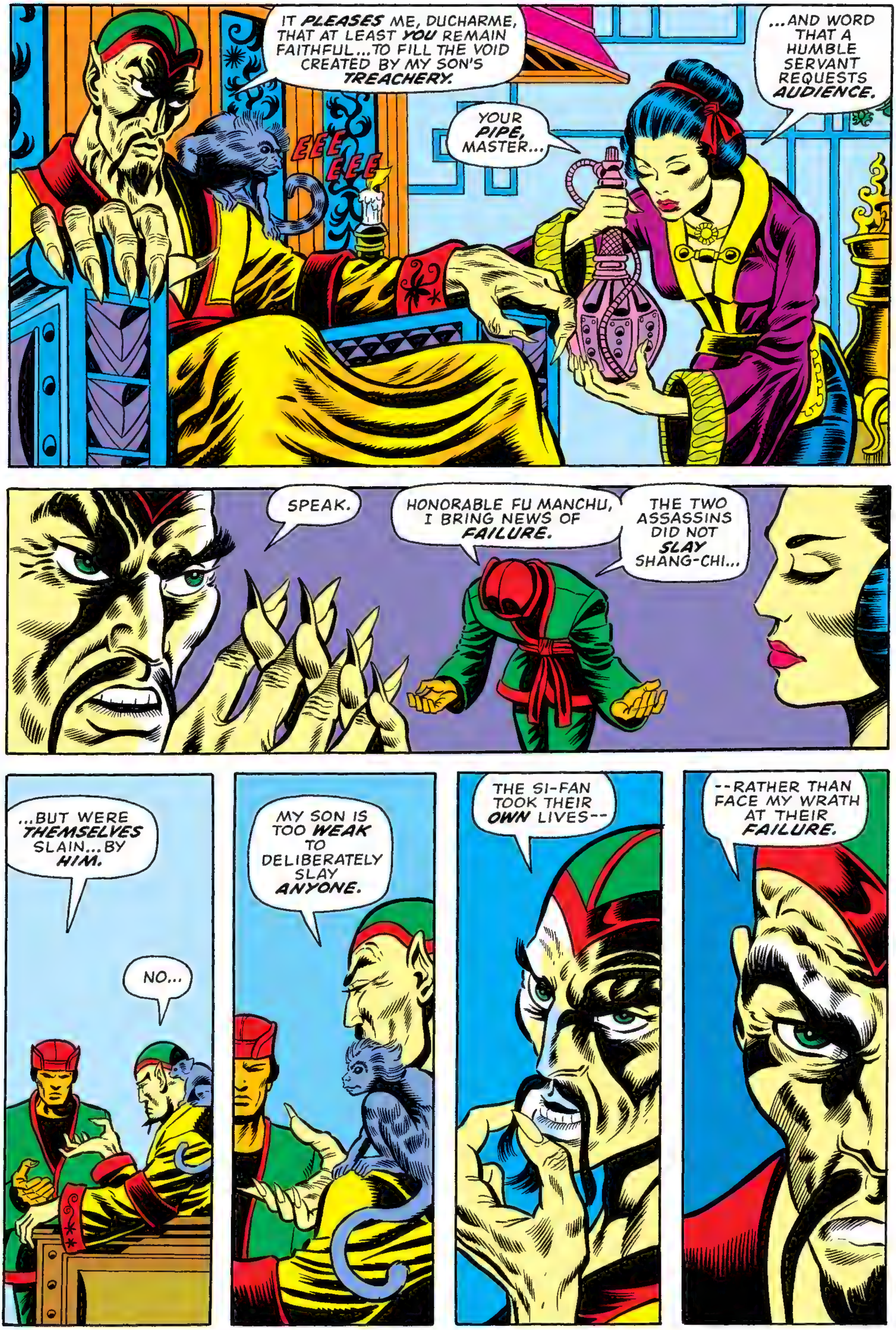
DOUG MOENCH *WORDS*	PAUL GULACY & DAN ADKINS *PICTURES*	P. GOLDBERG *COLORS*	ARTIE SIMEK *LETTERS*	ROY THOMAS *GUIDANCE*

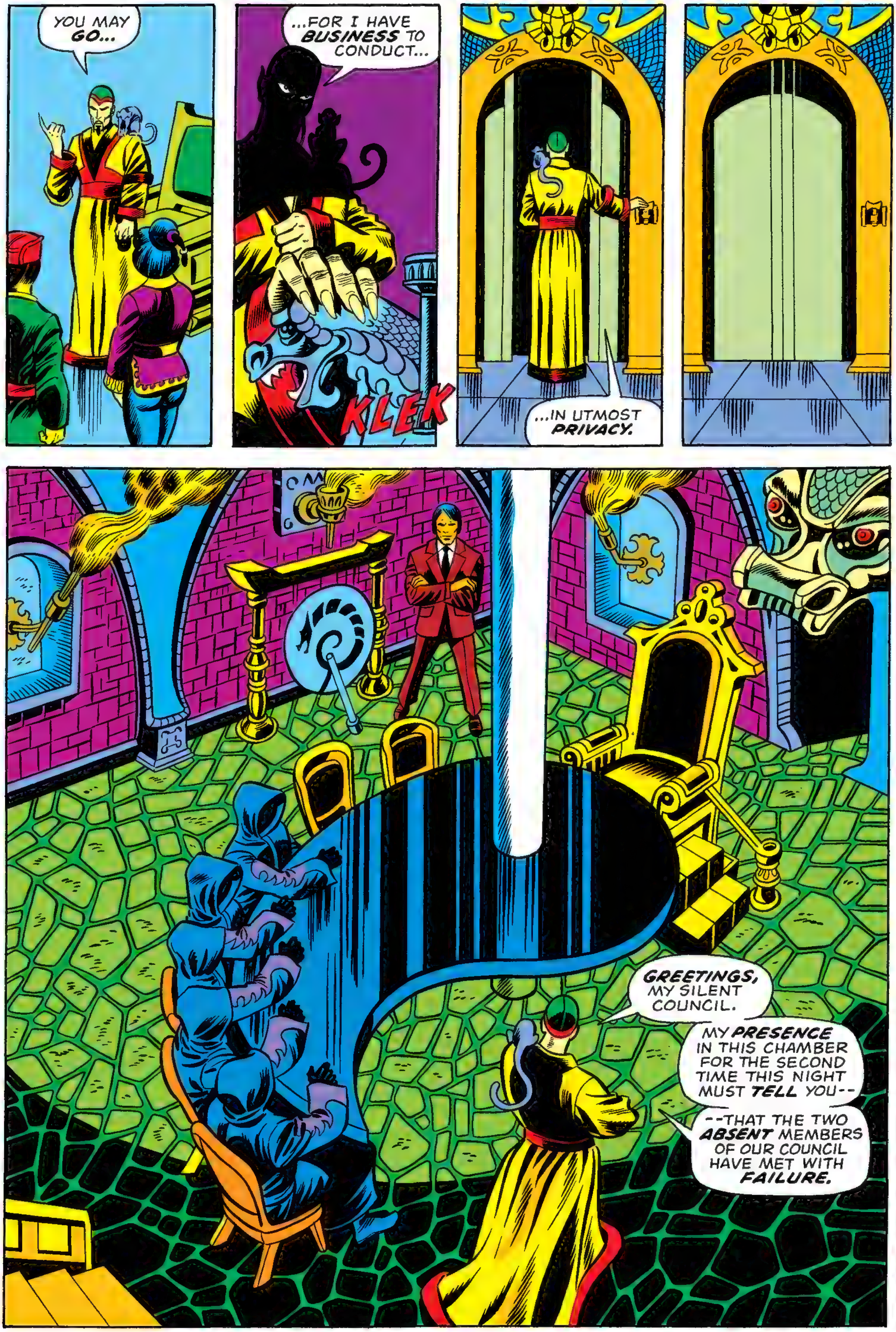

"A SOUND--
"--LIKE THE HISS OF A SERPENT--
"--BEFORE STRIKING.
SHTOK!
"THE PARCHMENT--
"--AROUND THE DAGGER'S HILT...
"...TELLS ME WITHOUT WORDS...
"...THAT THE ONE WHO GUIDED ITS HISSING PATH--
"...KNEW THAT I WOULD EVADE THE DAGGER'S POINT...
"...AND LIVE TO READ THE PARCHMENT'S WORDS.
"BUT MY FIRST COMMUNICATION WITH THE PARCHMENT'S MESSENGER--
"--WOULD BE OF A MORE DIRECT NATURE.
PLUD!
BLANG!

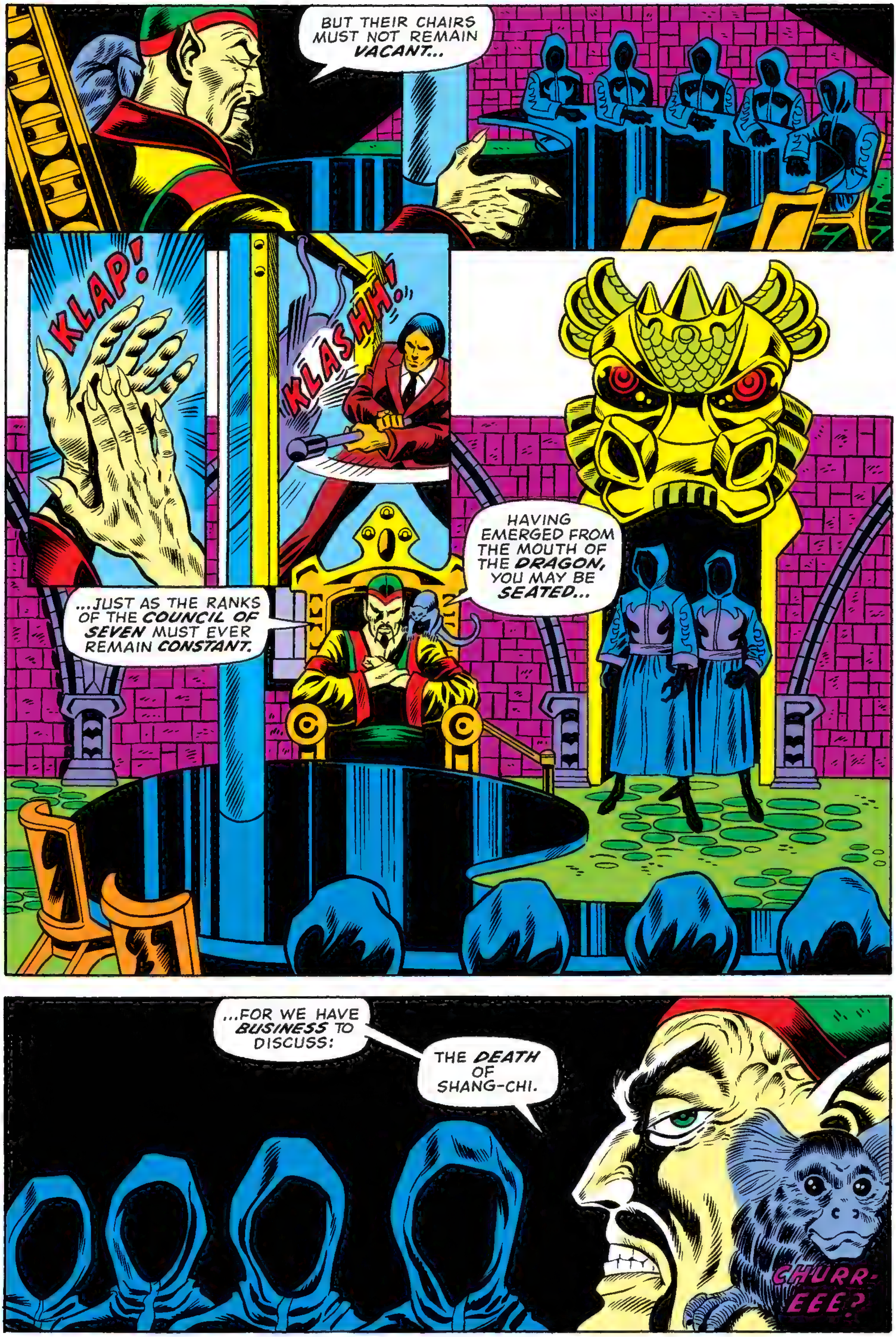

"I ATTEMPT TO SEEK **ANSWERS...**
WHY DID YOU POSE AS THE ***ASSASSIN--***
--WHEN YOU MEANT ONLY TO--
ROY'S TAKE-OUT
UHFF--!
"BUT I DO NOT HAVE A CHANCE TO FORM **QUESTIONS...**
"AND WHEN I **RISE** FROM MY PAIN, I SEE THAT THEY HAVE **BOTH** REMOVED THEIR ROBES--
--TO REVEAL THEMSELVES AS **GENUINE** ASSASSINS.
PREPARE TO ***DIE,*** SHANG-CHI.


"I AM FORCED TO COMBAT MYSTERY.
OOOOFFFFFFF
MSSSSSSSSSSSSS
TUFF
"WHY WOULD THE ONE WHO WISHED ME LIFE--
--BE JOINED BY ANOTHER--
AHG-K-K-K!
SHUK!
"--WHO WOULD UNITE WITH HIM IN WISHING ME DEATH?
IT IS THE MOMENT OF YOUR DEATH, SON OF FU MANCHU.
"HE LIES...
SAP!
"...AND WHEN I SHOW HIM THE FALSENESS OF HIS STATEMENT--

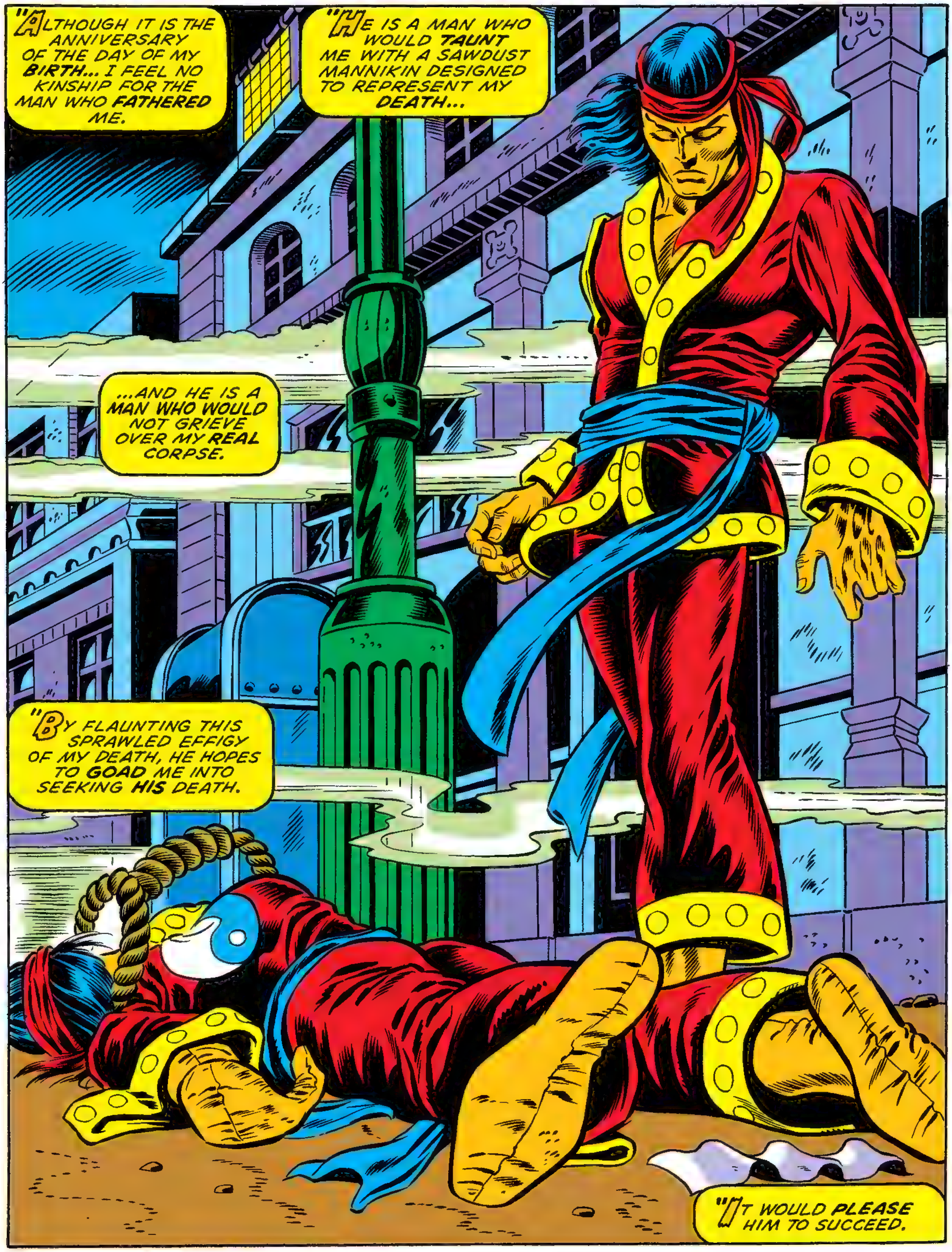

"--HE CHOOSES NOT TO FACE IT...
KRATCH!
"...PREFERRING TO SWALLOW THE MOMENT OF HIS OWN DEATH--
"--BY A CAPSULE OF LETHAL GAS, LODGED BETWEEN HIS TEETH.
SSSSSSSSSSSS
"I MUST KNOW WHY HE WOULD SUBSTITUTE HIS OWN DEATH, FINDING MINE UNATTAINABLE.
GREETINGS ON THE ANNIVERSARY OF THE DAY OF YOUR BIRTH, MY SON. IT IS A MOST APPROPRIATE OCCASION UPON WHICH TO OBSERVE THE DAY OF YOUR DEATH.
FU MANCHU
"MY FATHER...
"...WOULD FILL THE NIGHT--
RINCH!
"--WITH A GAME.
"A GAME IN WHICH HE HAS WILLINGLY SENT TWO OF HIS SI-FAN ASSASSINS TO VERY REAL DEATHS...
"...THAT HE MIGHT TAUNT ME WITH A MOCK DEATH.

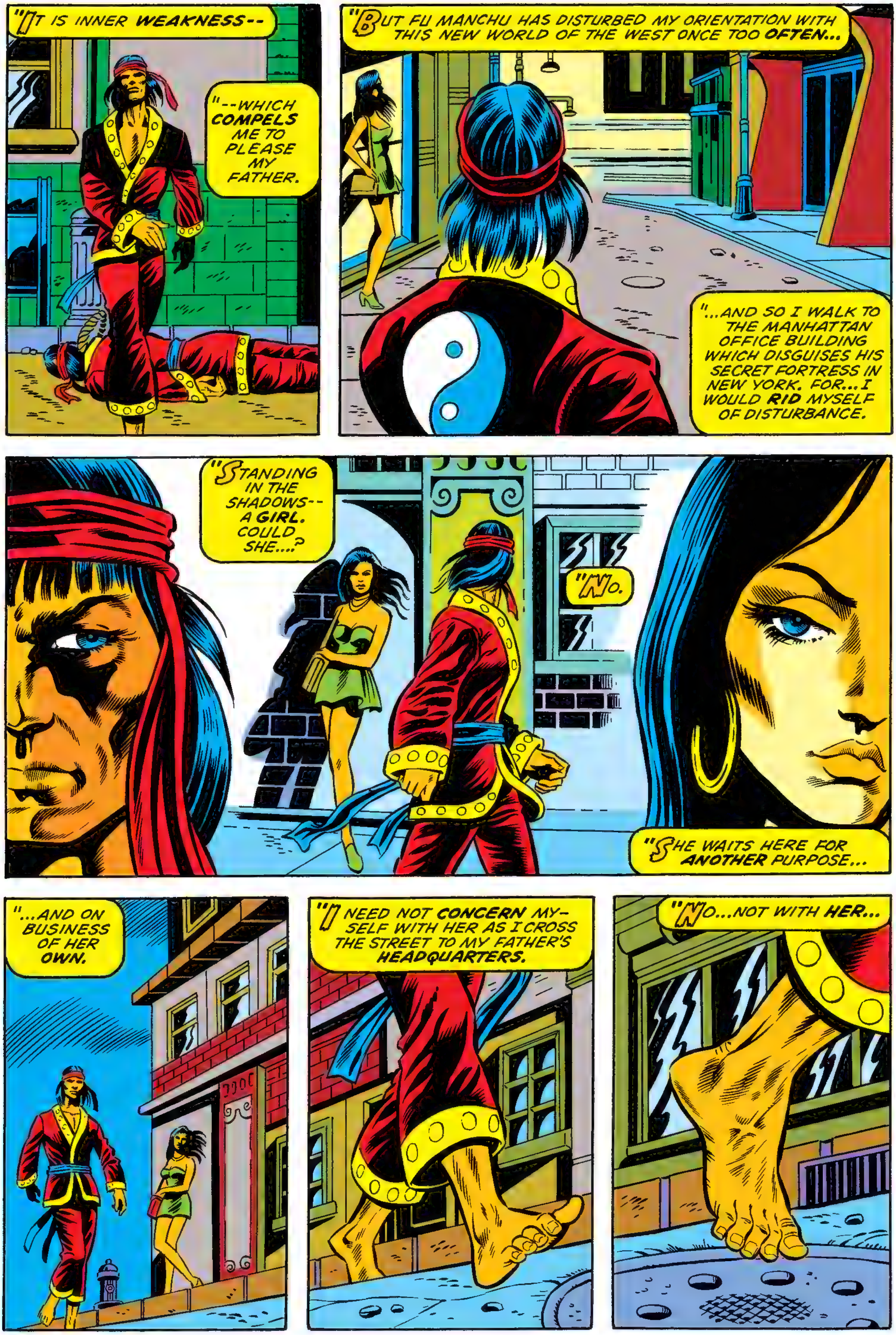

IT **PLEASES** ME, DUCHARME, THAT AT LEAST **YOU** REMAIN FAITHFUL...TO FILL THE VOID CREATED BY MY SON'S **TREACHERY.**
EEE EEE
YOUR **PIPE,** MASTER...
...AND WORD THAT A HUMBLE SERVANT REQUESTS **AUDIENCE.**
SPEAK.
HONORABLE FU MANCHU, I BRING NEWS OF **FAILURE.**
THE TWO ASSASSINS DID NOT **SLAY** SHANG-CHI...
...BUT WERE **THEMSELVES** SLAIN...BY **HIM.**
NO...
MY SON IS TOO **WEAK** TO DELIBERATELY SLAY **ANYONE.**
THE SI-FAN TOOK THEIR **OWN** LIVES--
--RATHER THAN FACE MY WRATH AT THEIR **FAILURE.**

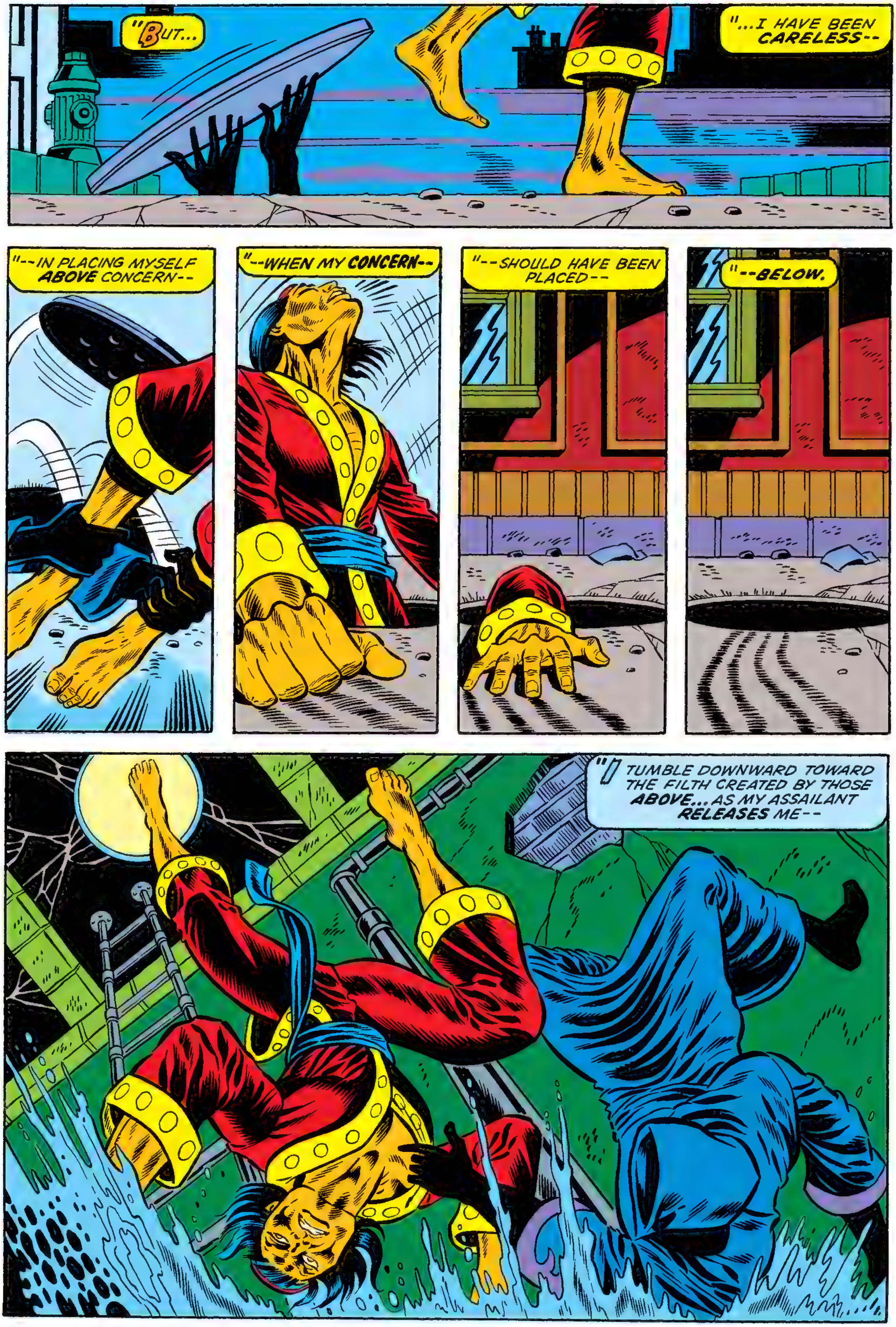

YOU MAY GO...
...FOR I HAVE BUSINESS TO CONDUCT...
KLEK
...IN UTMOST PRIVACY.
GREETINGS, MY SILENT COUNCIL.
MY PRESENCE IN THIS CHAMBER FOR THE SECOND TIME THIS NIGHT MUST TELL YOU--
--THAT THE TWO ABSENT MEMBERS OF OUR COUNCIL HAVE MET WITH FAILURE.

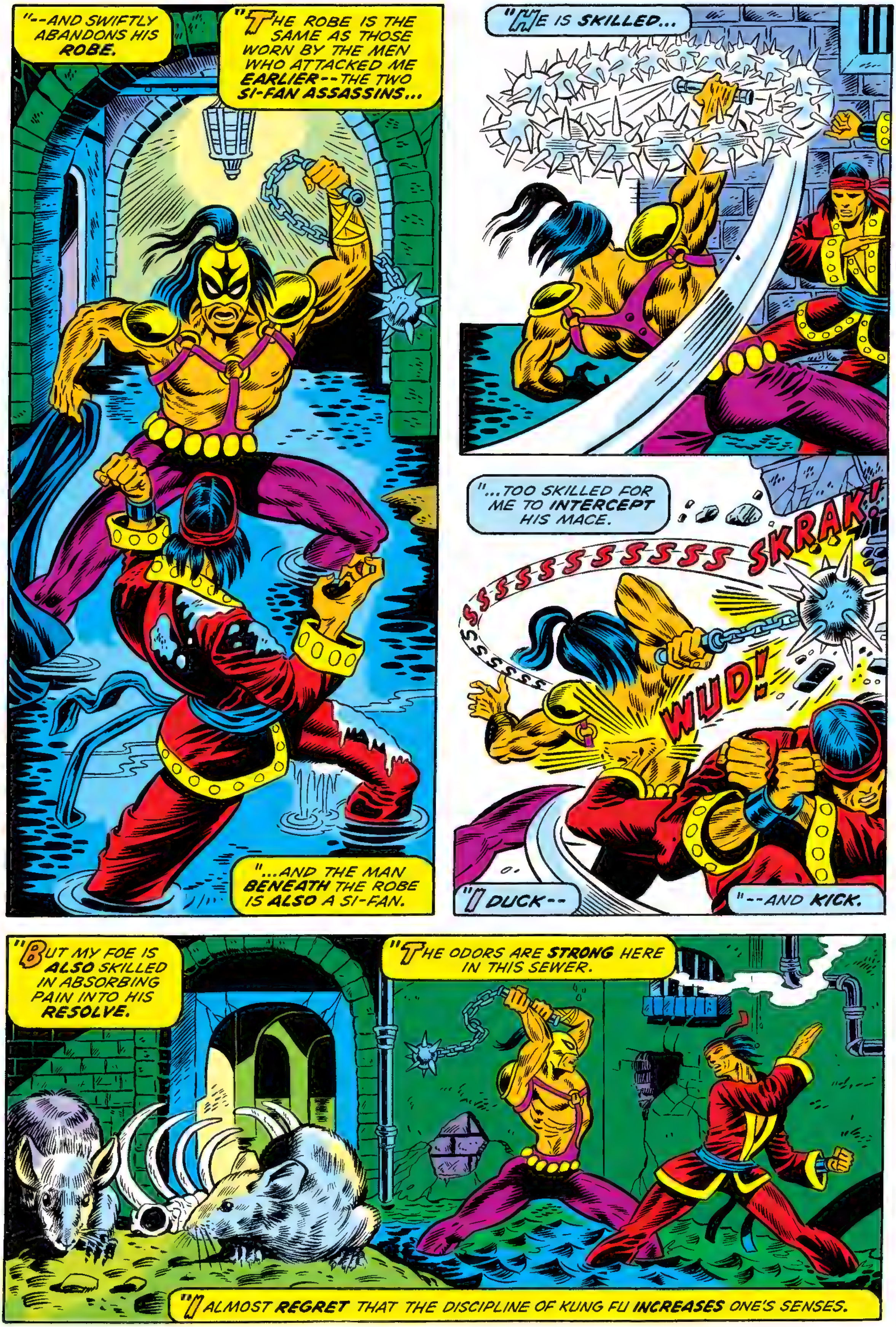

BUT THEIR CHAIRS MUST NOT REMAIN *VACANT...*
KLAP!
KLASHH!
...JUST AS THE RANKS OF THE **COUNCIL OF SEVEN** MUST EVER REMAIN **CONSTANT.**
HAVING EMERGED FROM THE MOUTH OF THE **DRAGON,** YOU MAY BE **SEATED...**
...FOR WE HAVE **BUSINESS** TO DISCUSS:
THE **DEATH** OF SHANG-CHI.
CHURR-EEE?

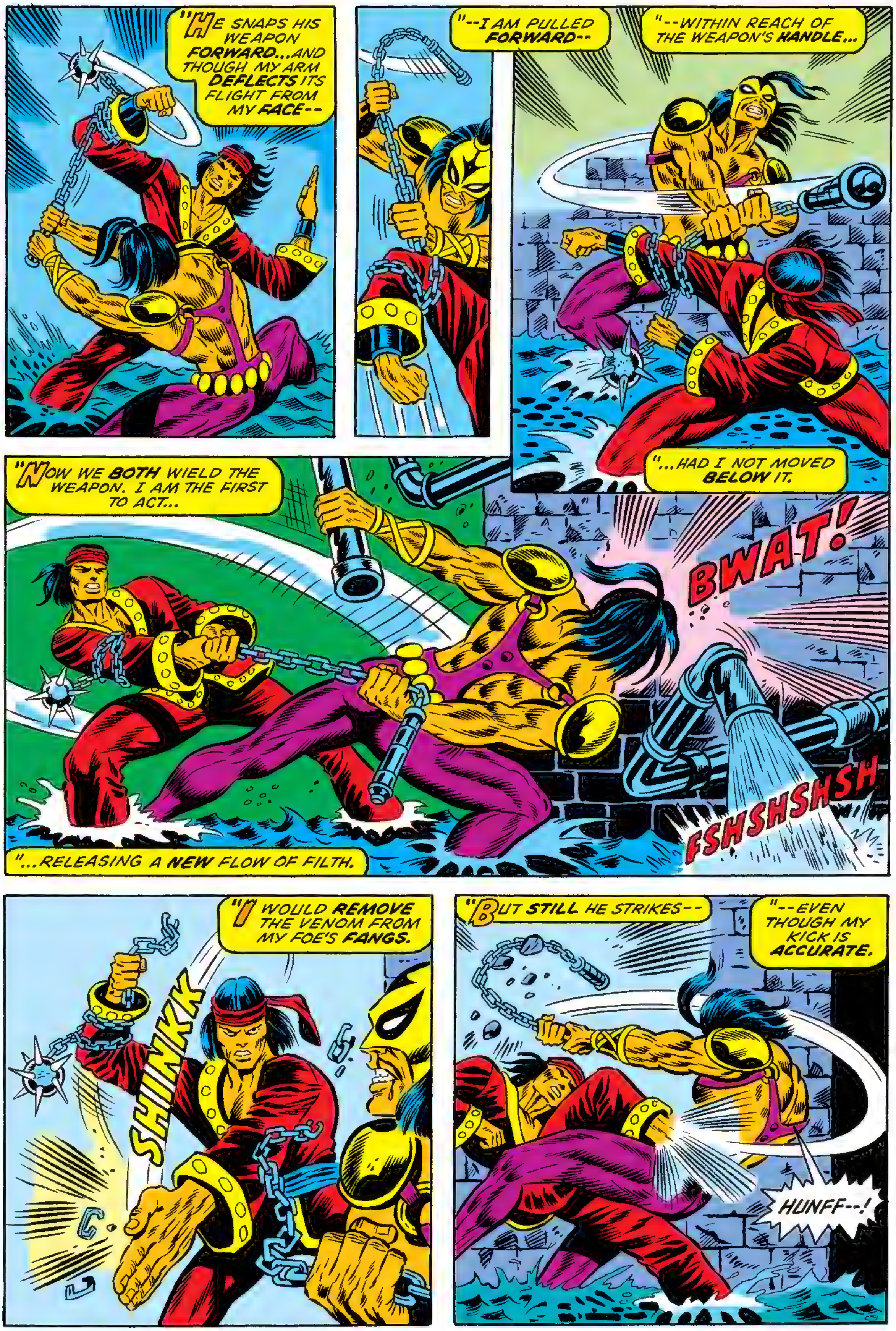
PART TWO / THE ENEMY WITHIN!

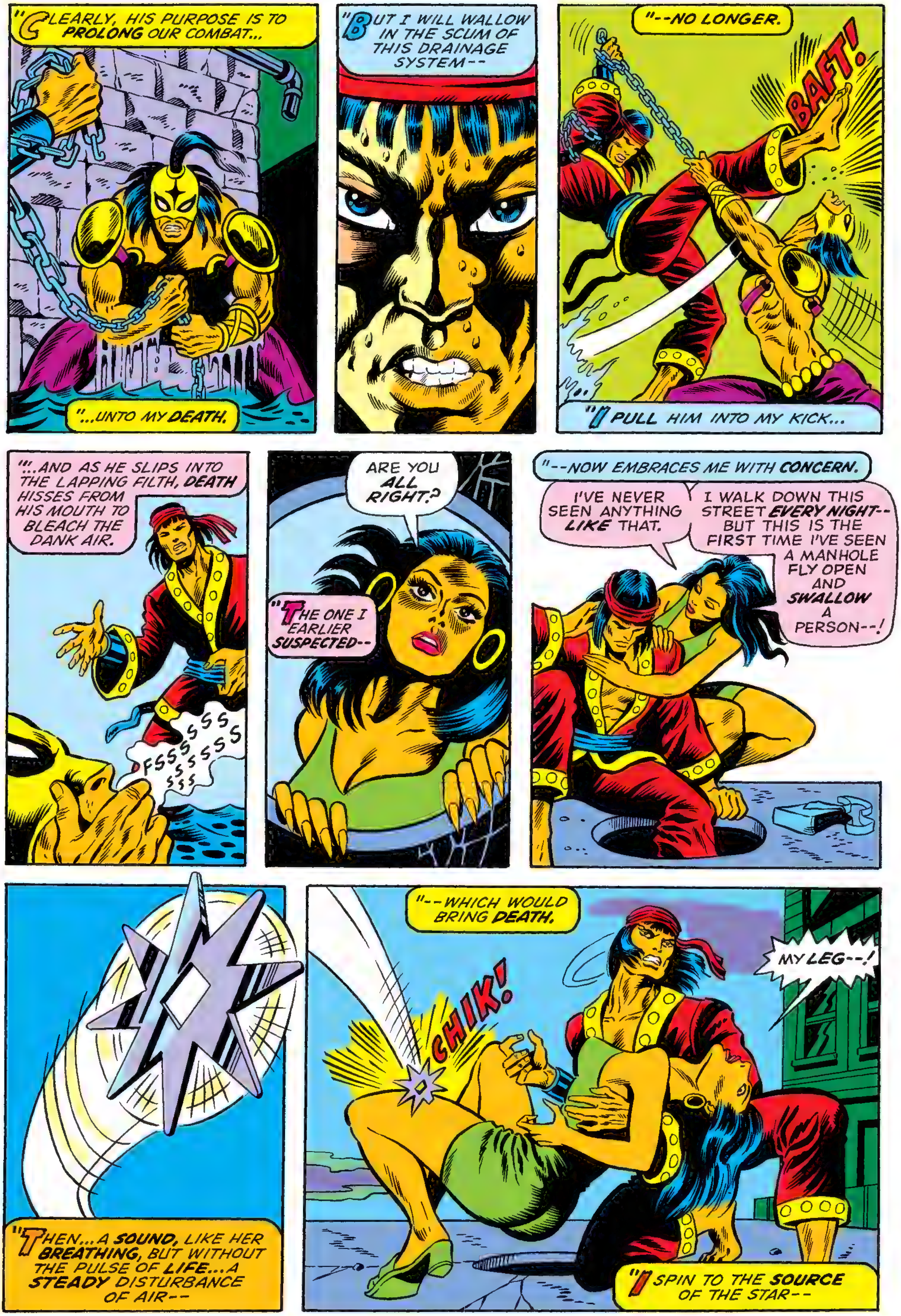

"ALTHOUGH IT IS THE ANNIVERSARY OF THE DAY OF MY **BIRTH**... I FEEL NO KINSHIP FOR THE MAN WHO **FATHERED** ME.
"HE IS A MAN WHO WOULD **TAUNT** ME WITH A SAWDUST MANNIKIN DESIGNED TO REPRESENT MY **DEATH**...
...AND HE IS A MAN WHO WOULD NOT GRIEVE OVER MY **REAL** CORPSE.
"BY FLAUNTING THIS SPRAWLED EFFIGY OF MY DEATH, HE HOPES TO **GOAD** ME INTO SEEKING **HIS** DEATH.
"IT WOULD **PLEASE** HIM TO SUCCEED.

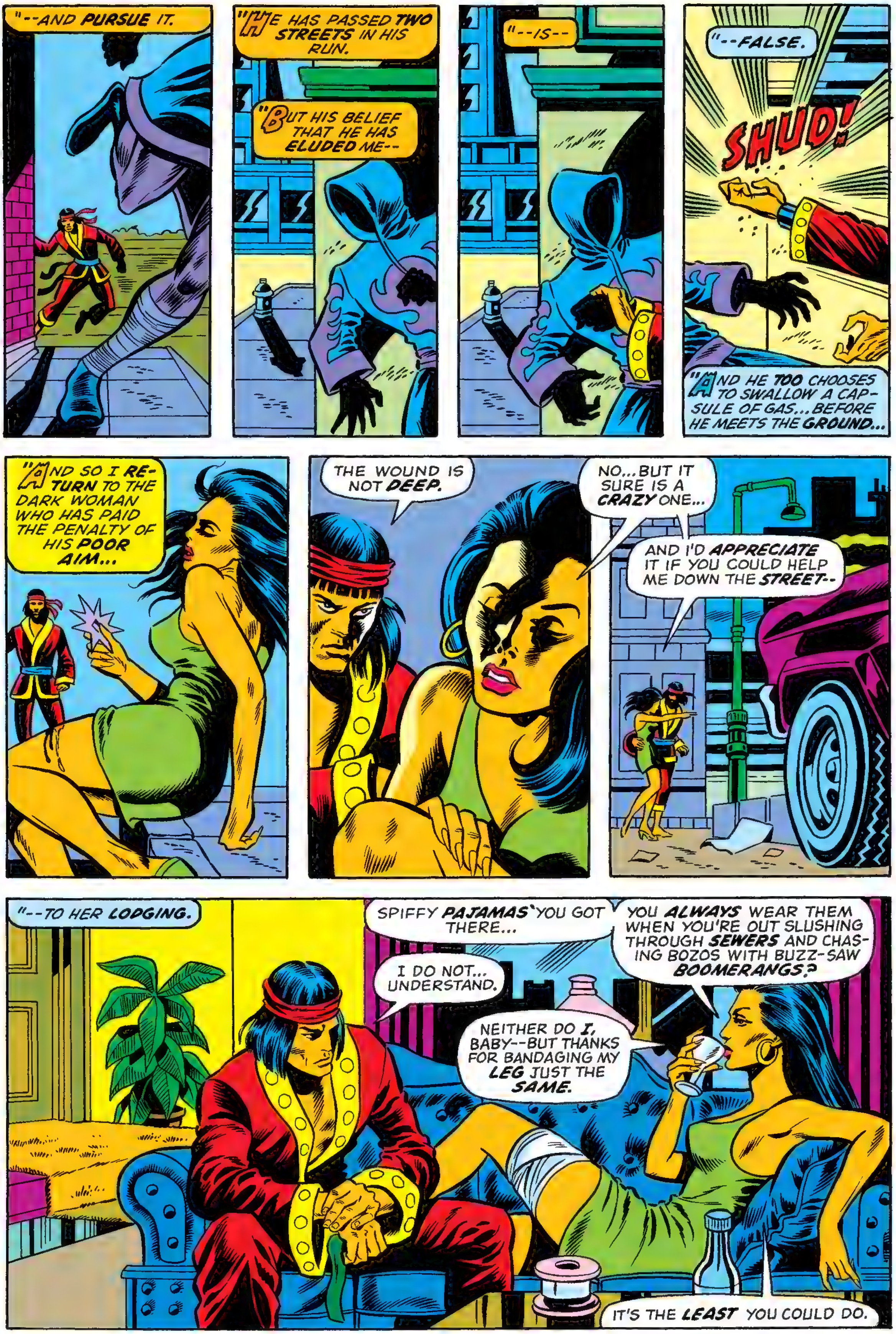

"IT IS INNER WEAKNESS--
"--WHICH COMPELS ME TO PLEASE MY FATHER.
"BUT FU MANCHU HAS DISTURBED MY ORIENTATION WITH THIS NEW WORLD OF THE WEST ONCE TOO OFTEN...
"...AND SO I WALK TO THE MANHATTAN OFFICE BUILDING WHICH DISGUISES HIS SECRET FORTRESS IN NEW YORK. FOR...I WOULD RID MYSELF OF DISTURBANCE.
"STANDING IN THE SHADOWS--A GIRL. COULD SHE...?
"NO.
"SHE WAITS HERE FOR ANOTHER PURPOSE...
"...AND ON BUSINESS OF HER OWN.
"I NEED NOT CONCERN MYSELF WITH HER AS I CROSS THE STREET TO MY FATHER'S HEADQUARTERS.
"NO...NOT WITH HER...

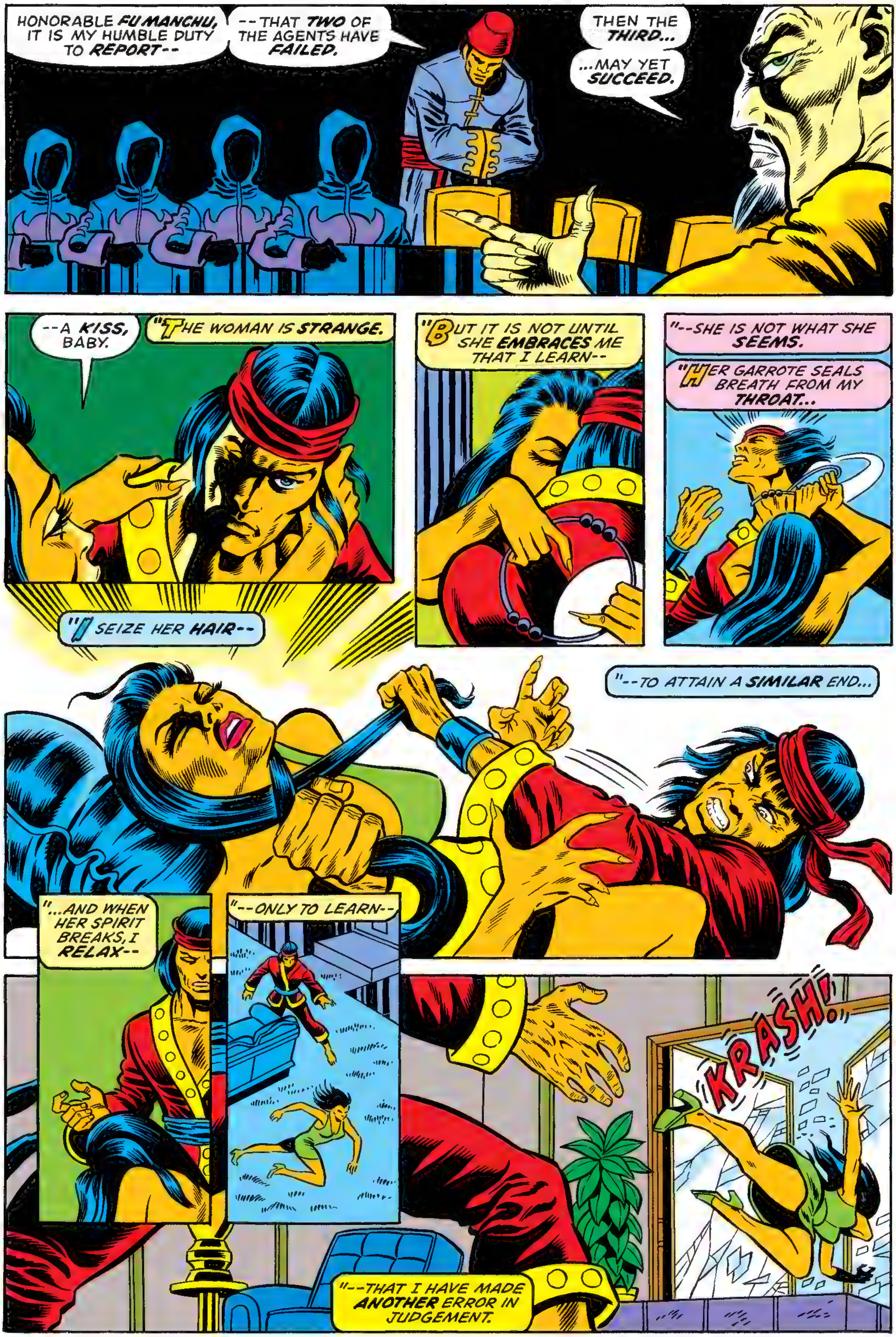

"BUT...
"...I HAVE BEEN CARELESS--
"--IN PLACING MYSELF ABOVE CONCERN--
"--WHEN MY CONCERN--
"--SHOULD HAVE BEEN PLACED--
"--BELOW.
"I TUMBLE DOWNWARD TOWARD THE FILTH CREATED BY THOSE ABOVE... AS MY ASSAILANT RELEASES ME--

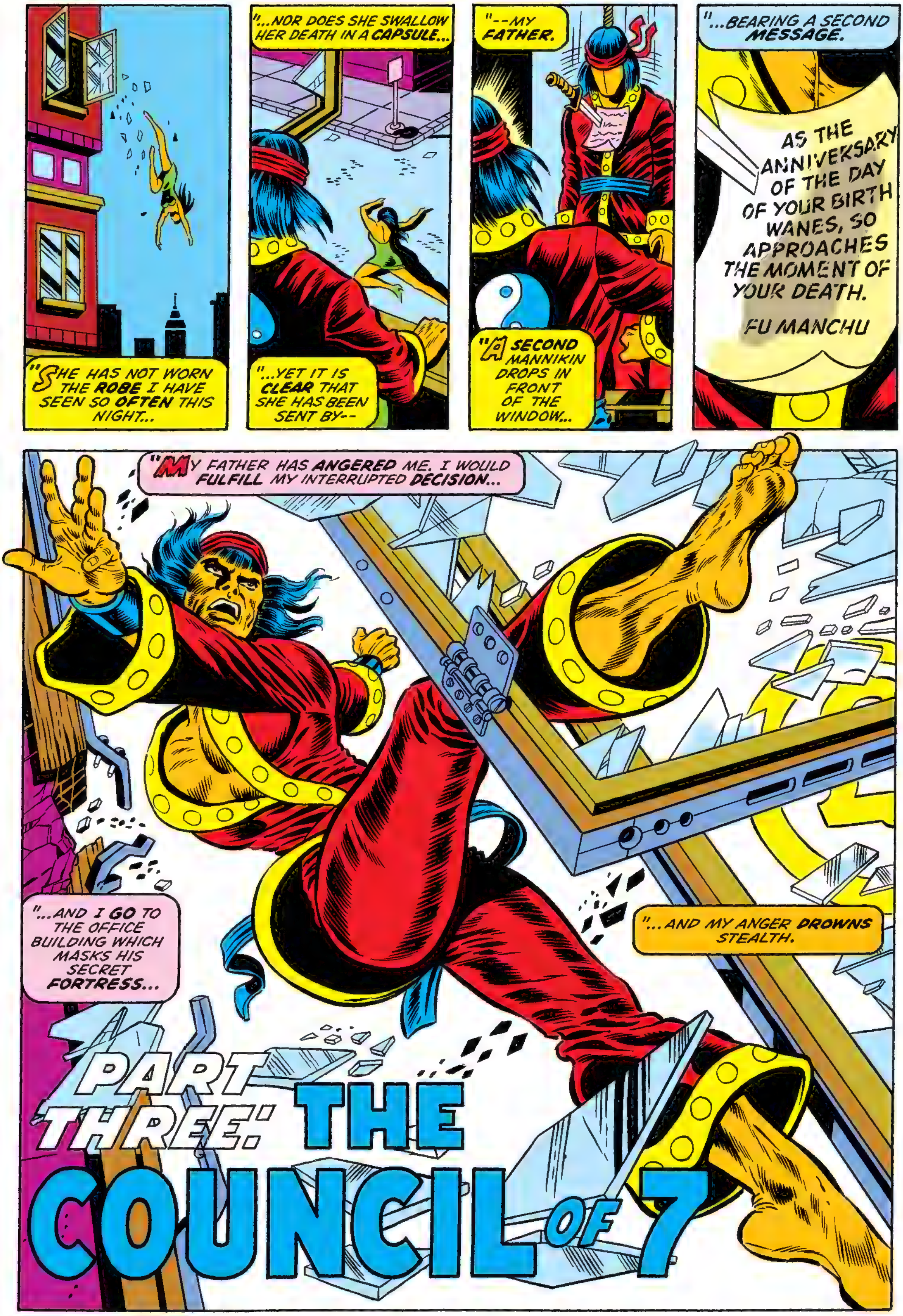

"--AND SWIFTLY ABANDONS HIS **ROBE.**
"THE ROBE IS THE SAME AS THOSE WORN BY THE MEN WHO ATTACKED ME **EARLIER**--THE TWO **SI-FAN ASSASSINS...**
"...AND THE MAN **BENEATH** THE ROBE IS **ALSO** A SI-FAN.
"HE IS **SKILLED...**
"...TOO SKILLED FOR ME TO **INTERCEPT** HIS MACE.
SSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSS
SKRAK!
WUD!
"I **DUCK**--
"--AND **KICK.**
"BUT MY FOE IS **ALSO** SKILLED IN ABSORBING PAIN INTO HIS **RESOLVE.**
"THE ODORS ARE **STRONG** HERE IN THIS SEWER.
"I ALMOST **REGRET** THAT THE DISCIPLINE OF KUNG FU **INCREASES** ONE'S SENSES.

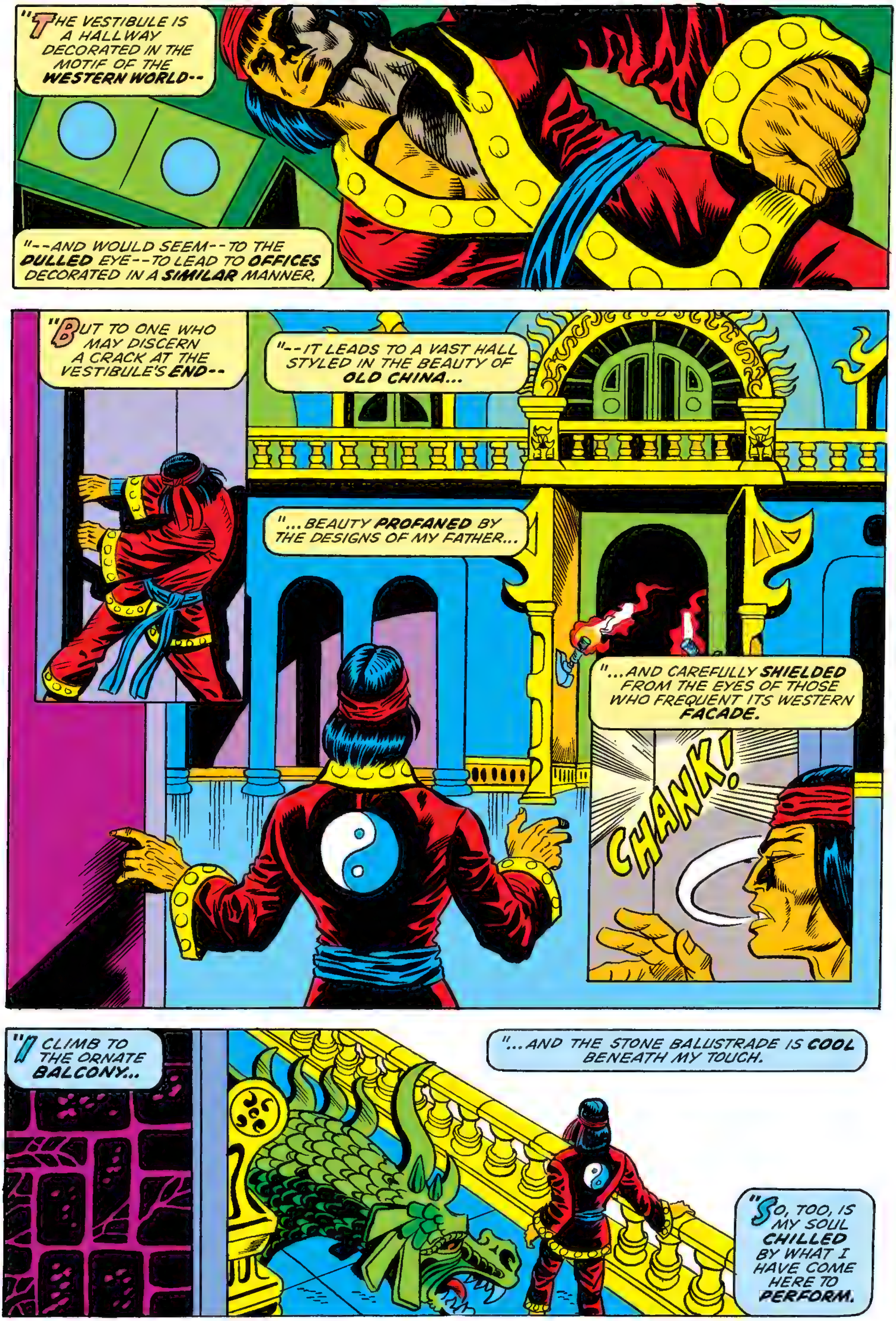

"HE SNAPS HIS WEAPON FORWARD...AND THOUGH MY ARM DEFLECTS ITS FLIGHT FROM MY FACE--
"--I AM PULLED FORWARD--
"--WITHIN REACH OF THE WEAPON'S HANDLE...
"...HAD I NOT MOVED BELOW IT.
"NOW WE BOTH WIELD THE WEAPON. I AM THE FIRST TO ACT...
BWAT!
FSHSHSHSH
"...RELEASING A NEW FLOW OF FILTH.
"I WOULD REMOVE THE VENOM FROM MY FOE'S FANGS.
SHINKK
"BUT STILL HE STRIKES--
"--EVEN THOUGH MY KICK IS ACCURATE.
HUNFF--!

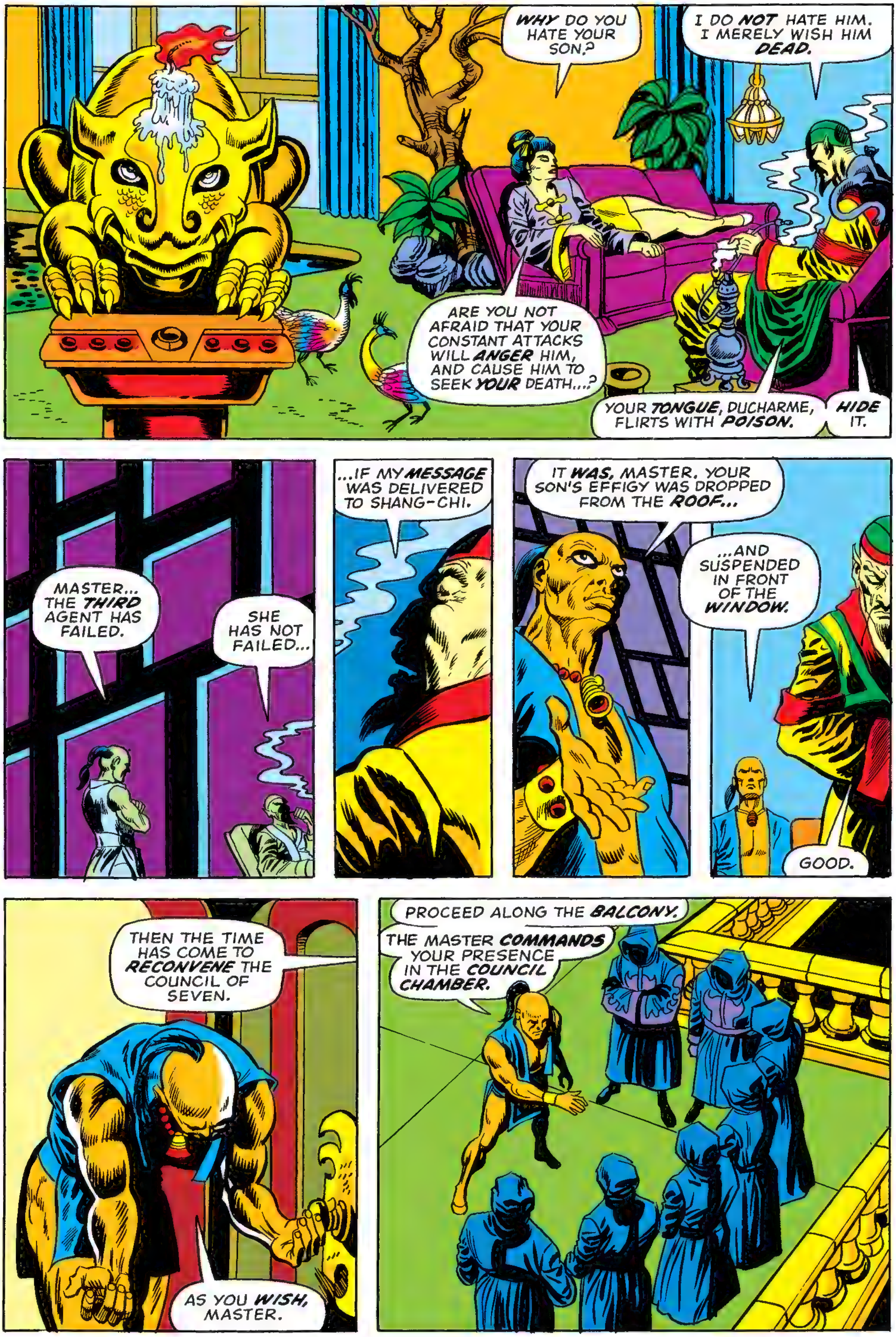

"CLEARLY, HIS PURPOSE IS TO PROLONG OUR COMBAT...
"...UNTO MY DEATH.
"BUT I WILL WALLOW IN THE SCUM OF THIS DRAINAGE SYSTEM--
"--NO LONGER.
BAFT!
"I PULL HIM INTO MY KICK...
"...AND AS HE SLIPS INTO THE LAPPING FILTH, DEATH HISSES FROM HIS MOUTH TO BLEACH THE DANK AIR.
FSSSSSSSSSSSSSS
ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?
"THE ONE I EARLIER SUSPECTED--
"--NOW EMBRACES ME WITH CONCERN.
I'VE NEVER SEEN ANYTHING LIKE THAT.
I WALK DOWN THIS STREET EVERY NIGHT-- BUT THIS IS THE FIRST TIME I'VE SEEN A MANHOLE FLY OPEN AND SWALLOW A PERSON--!
"THEN...A SOUND, LIKE HER BREATHING, BUT WITHOUT THE PULSE OF LIFE...A STEADY DISTURBANCE OF AIR--
"--WHICH WOULD BRING DEATH.
MY LEG--!
CHIK!
"I SPIN TO THE SOURCE OF THE STAR--

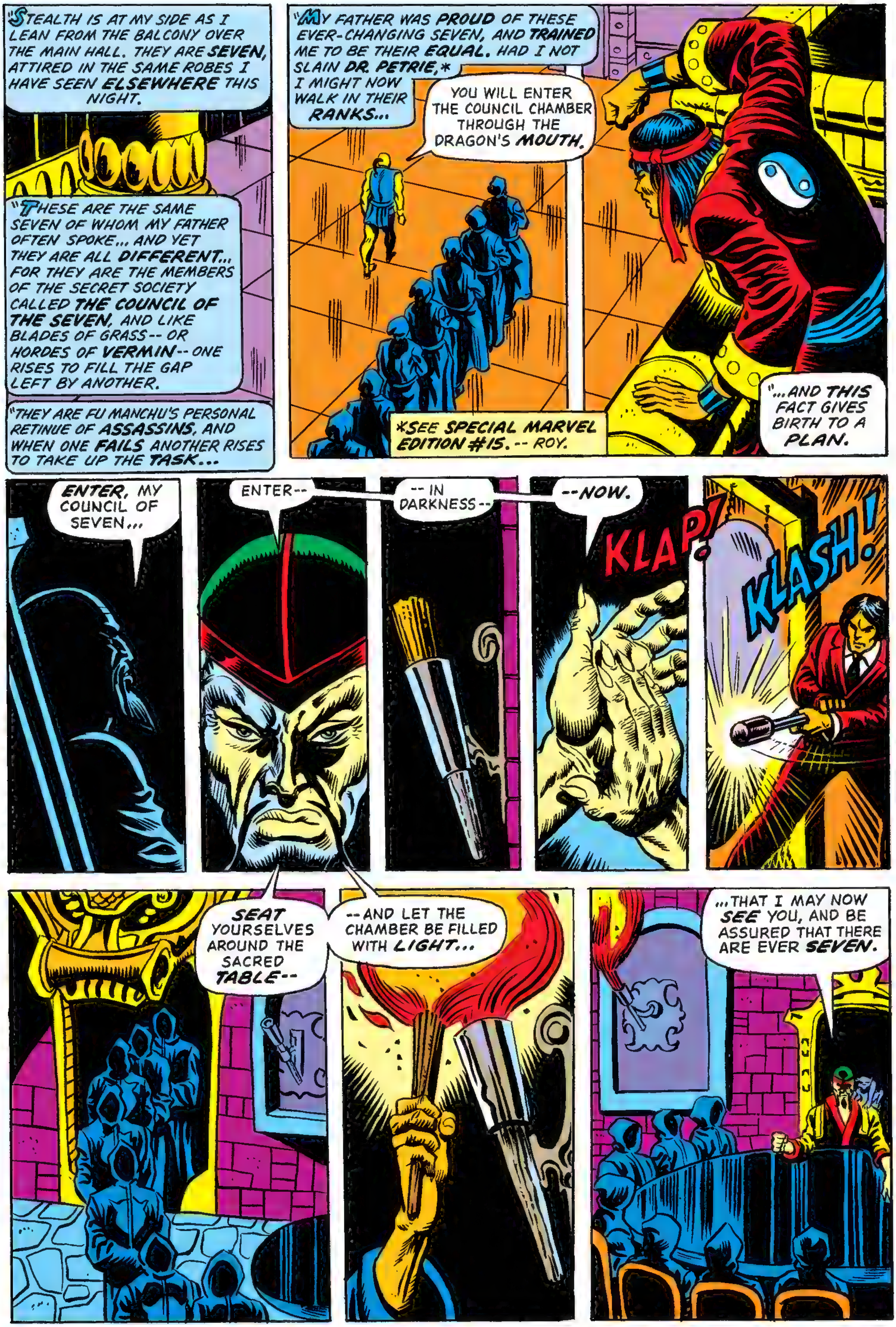

"--AND PURSUE IT.
"HE HAS PASSED TWO STREETS IN HIS RUN.
"BUT HIS BELIEF THAT HE HAS ELUDED ME--
"--IS--
"--FALSE.
SHUD!
"AND HE TOO CHOOSES TO SWALLOW A CAPSULE OF GAS...BEFORE HE MEETS THE GROUND...
"AND SO I RETURN TO THE DARK WOMAN WHO HAS PAID THE PENALTY OF HIS POOR AIM...
THE WOUND IS NOT DEEP.
NO...BUT IT SURE IS A CRAZY ONE...
AND I'D APPRECIATE IT IF YOU COULD HELP ME DOWN THE STREET--
"--TO HER LODGING.
SPIFFY PAJAMAS YOU GOT THERE...
YOU ALWAYS WEAR THEM WHEN YOU'RE OUT SLUSHING THROUGH SEWERS AND CHASING BOZOS WITH BUZZ-SAW BOOMERANGS?
I DO NOT... UNDERSTAND.
NEITHER DO I, BABY--BUT THANKS FOR BANDAGING MY LEG JUST THE SAME.
IT'S THE LEAST YOU COULD DO.

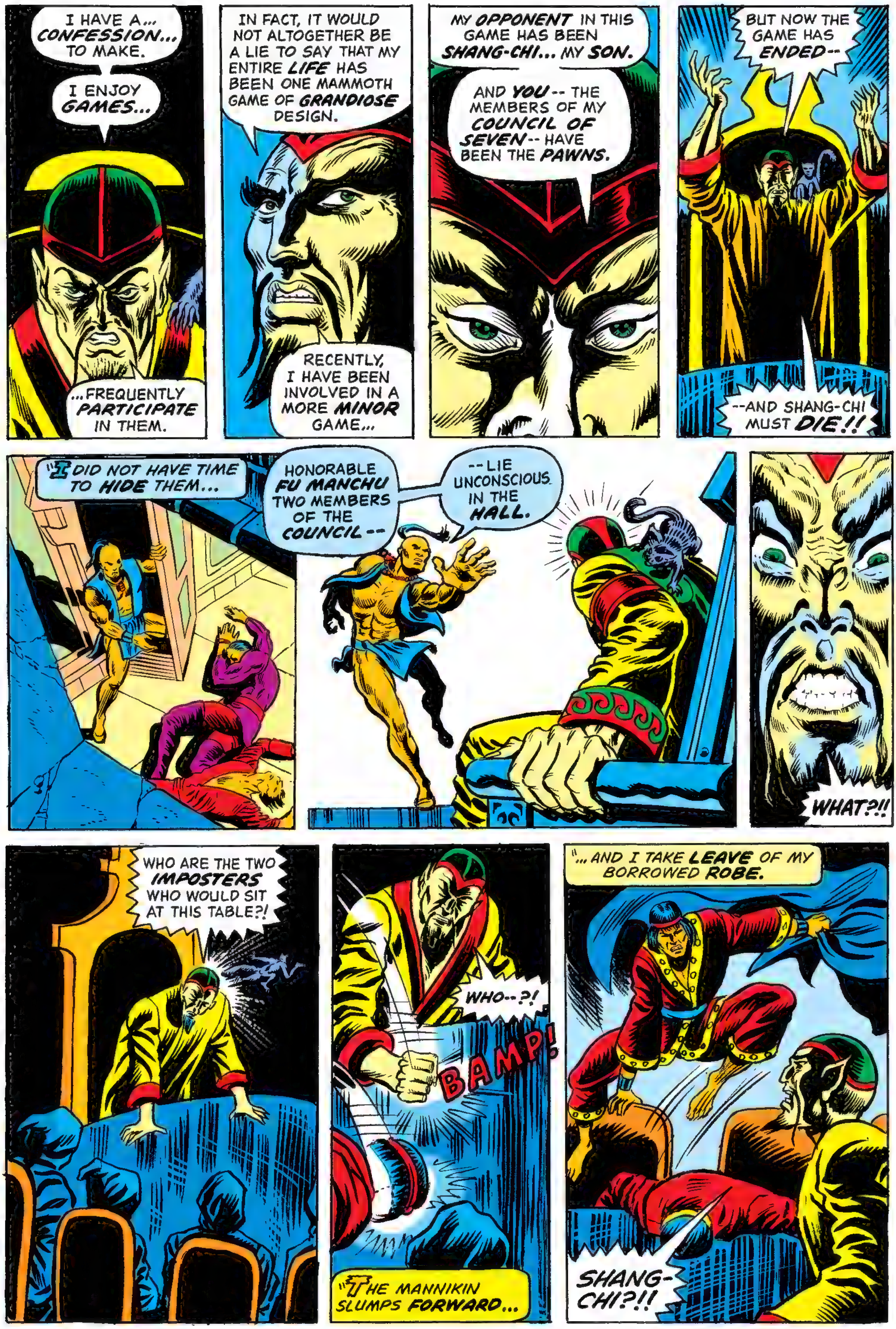

HONORABLE **FU MANCHU**, IT IS MY HUMBLE DUTY TO **REPORT**--
--THAT **TWO** OF THE AGENTS HAVE **FAILED.**
THEN THE **THIRD...**
...MAY YET **SUCCEED.**
--A **KISS,** BABY.
"THE WOMAN IS **STRANGE.**
"BUT IT IS NOT UNTIL SHE **EMBRACES** ME THAT I LEARN--
"--SHE IS NOT WHAT SHE **SEEMS.**
"HER GARROTE SEALS BREATH FROM MY **THROAT...**
"I SEIZE HER **HAIR**--
"--TO ATTAIN A **SIMILAR** END...
"...AND WHEN HER SPIRIT BREAKS, I **RELAX**--
"--ONLY TO LEARN--
KRASH!
"--THAT I HAVE MADE **ANOTHER** ERROR IN JUDGEMENT.

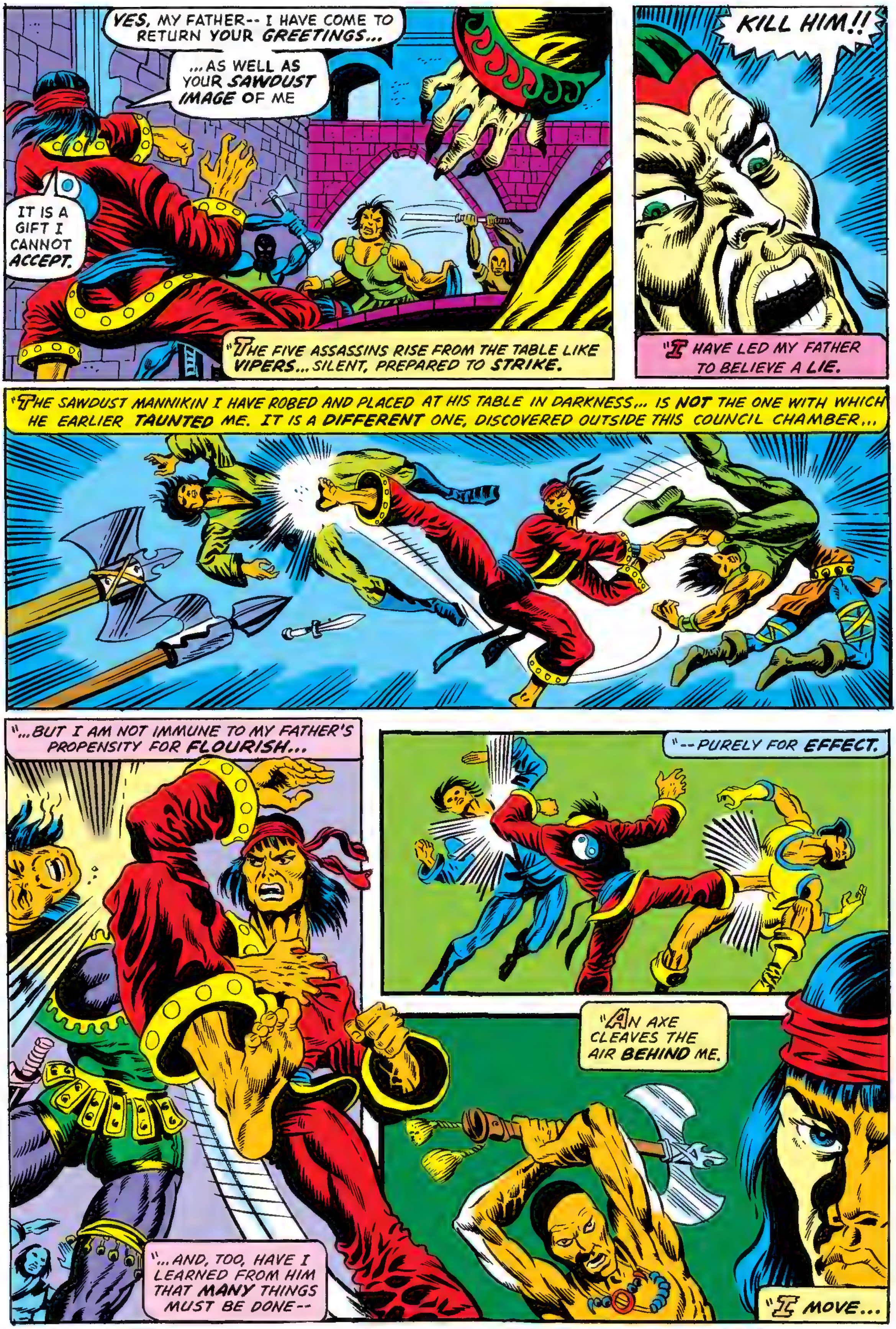

"SHE HAS NOT WORN THE ROBE I HAVE SEEN SO OFTEN THIS NIGHT...
"...NOR DOES SHE SWALLOW HER DEATH IN A CAPSULE...
"...YET IT IS CLEAR THAT SHE HAS BEEN SENT BY--
"--MY FATHER.
"A SECOND MANNIKIN DROPS IN FRONT OF THE WINDOW...
"...BEARING A SECOND MESSAGE.
AS THE ANNIVERSARY OF THE DAY OF YOUR BIRTH WANES, SO APPROACHES THE MOMENT OF YOUR DEATH.
FU MANCHU
"MY FATHER HAS ANGERED ME. I WOULD FULFILL MY INTERRUPTED DECISION...
"...AND I GO TO THE OFFICE BUILDING WHICH MASKS HIS SECRET FORTRESS...
"...AND MY ANGER DROWNS STEALTH.
PART THREE: THE COUNCIL OF 7

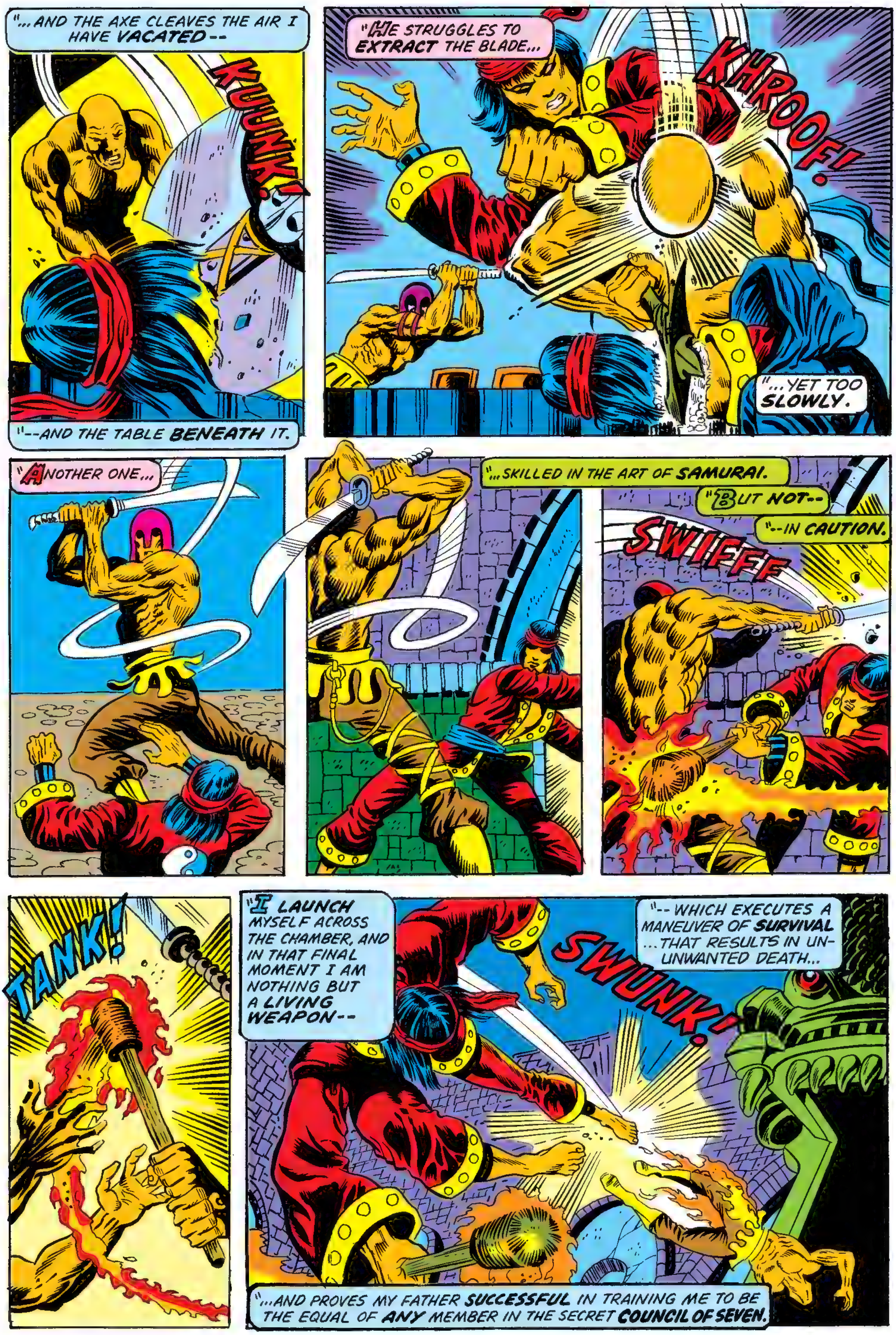

"THE VESTIBULE IS A HALLWAY DECORATED IN THE MOTIF OF THE **WESTERN WORLD**--
"--AND WOULD SEEM--TO THE **DULLED** EYE--TO LEAD TO **OFFICES** DECORATED IN A **SIMILAR** MANNER.
"BUT TO ONE WHO MAY DISCERN A CRACK AT THE VESTIBULE'S **END**--
"--IT LEADS TO A VAST HALL STYLED IN THE BEAUTY OF **OLD CHINA**...
"...BEAUTY **PROFANED** BY THE DESIGNS OF MY FATHER...
"...AND CAREFULLY **SHIELDED** FROM THE EYES OF THOSE WHO FREQUENT ITS WESTERN **FACADE**.
CHANK!
"I CLIMB TO THE ORNATE **BALCONY**...
"...AND THE STONE BALUSTRADE IS **COOL** BENEATH MY TOUCH.
"SO, TOO, IS MY SOUL **CHILLED** BY WHAT I HAVE COME HERE TO **PERFORM**.

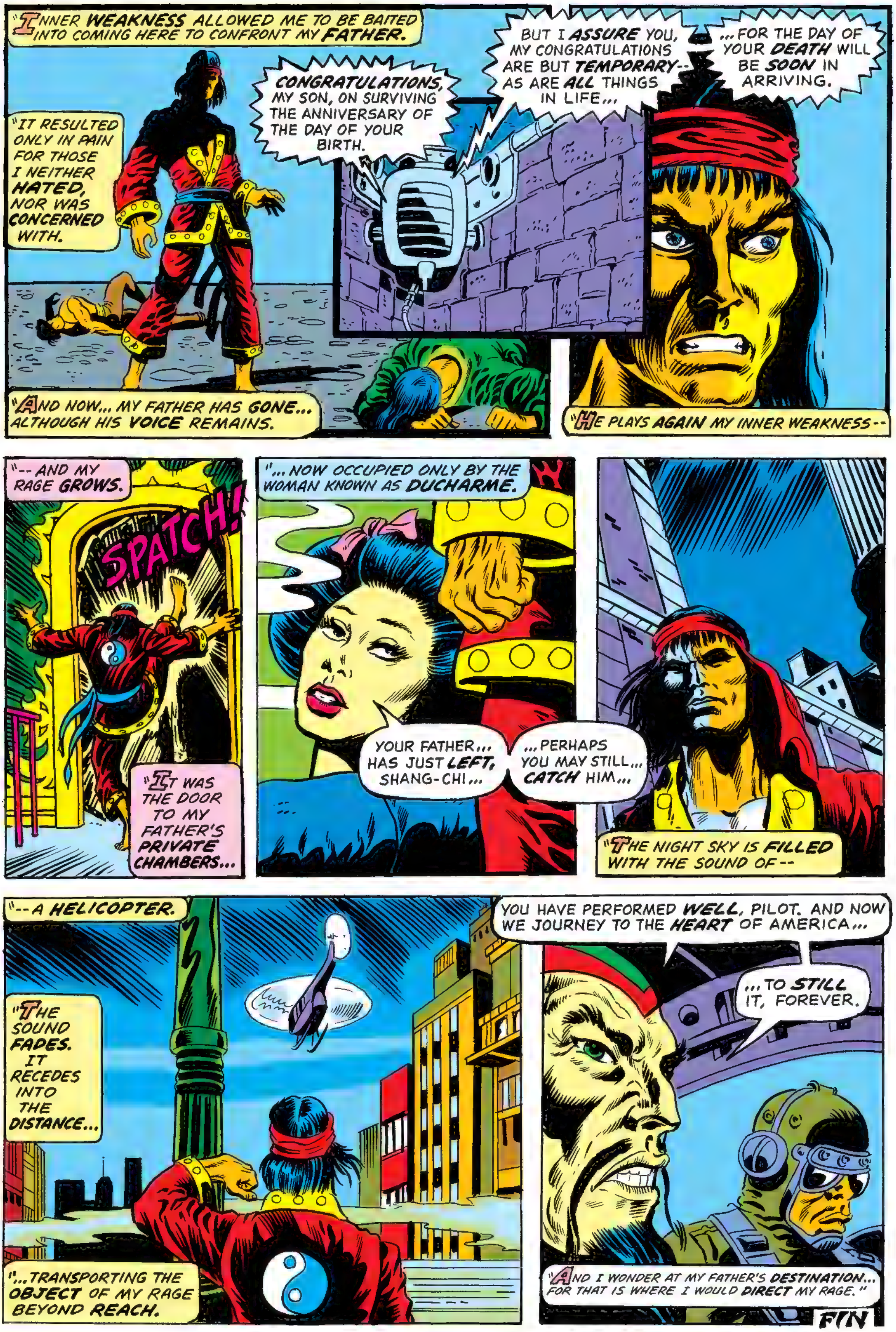

WHY DO YOU HATE YOUR SON?
I DO NOT HATE HIM. I MERELY WISH HIM DEAD.
ARE YOU NOT AFRAID THAT YOUR CONSTANT ATTACKS WILL ANGER HIM, AND CAUSE HIM TO SEEK YOUR DEATH...?
YOUR TONGUE, DUCHARME, FLIRTS WITH POISON.
HIDE IT.
MASTER... THE THIRD AGENT HAS FAILED.
SHE HAS NOT FAILED...
...IF MY MESSAGE WAS DELIVERED TO SHANG-CHI.
IT WAS, MASTER. YOUR SON'S EFFIGY WAS DROPPED FROM THE ROOF...
...AND SUSPENDED IN FRONT OF THE WINDOW.
GOOD.
THEN THE TIME HAS COME TO RECONVENE THE COUNCIL OF SEVEN.
AS YOU WISH, MASTER.
PROCEED ALONG THE BALCONY.
THE MASTER COMMANDS YOUR PRESENCE IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER.

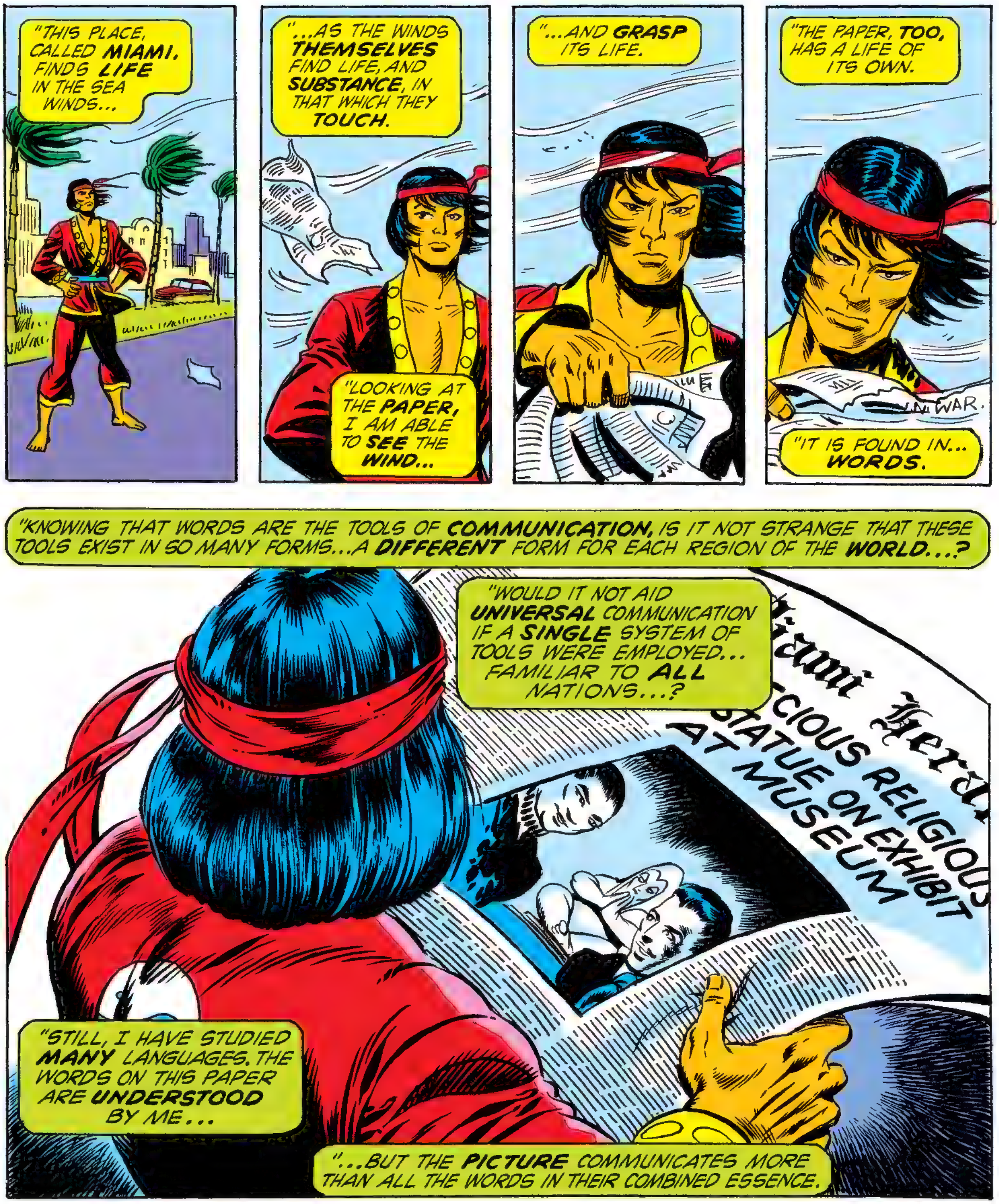

"STEALTH IS AT MY SIDE AS I LEAN FROM THE BALCONY OVER THE MAIN HALL. THEY ARE SEVEN, ATTIRED IN THE SAME ROBES I HAVE SEEN ELSEWHERE THIS NIGHT.
"THESE ARE THE SAME SEVEN OF WHOM MY FATHER OFTEN SPOKE... AND YET THEY ARE ALL DIFFERENT... FOR THEY ARE THE MEMBERS OF THE SECRET SOCIETY CALLED THE COUNCIL OF THE SEVEN, AND LIKE BLADES OF GRASS-- OR HORDES OF VERMIN-- ONE RISES TO FILL THE GAP LEFT BY ANOTHER.
"THEY ARE FU MANCHU'S PERSONAL RETINUE OF ASSASSINS, AND WHEN ONE FAILS ANOTHER RISES TO TAKE UP THE TASK...
"MY FATHER WAS PROUD OF THESE EVER-CHANGING SEVEN, AND TRAINED ME TO BE THEIR EQUAL. HAD I NOT SLAIN DR. PETRIE,* I MIGHT NOW WALK IN THEIR RANKS...
YOU WILL ENTER THE COUNCIL CHAMBER THROUGH THE DRAGON'S MOUTH.
"...AND THIS FACT GIVES BIRTH TO A PLAN.
*SEE SPECIAL MARVEL EDITION #15. -- ROY.
ENTER, MY COUNCIL OF SEVEN...
ENTER--
-- IN DARKNESS --
--NOW.
KLAP!
KLASH!
SEAT YOURSELVES AROUND THE SACRED TABLE--
--AND LET THE CHAMBER BE FILLED WITH LIGHT...
...THAT I MAY NOW SEE YOU, AND BE ASSURED THAT THERE ARE EVER SEVEN.


I HAVE A... *CONFESSION...* TO MAKE.
I ENJOY *GAMES...*
...FREQUENTLY *PARTICIPATE* IN THEM.
IN FACT, IT WOULD NOT ALTOGETHER BE A LIE TO SAY THAT MY ENTIRE *LIFE* HAS BEEN ONE MAMMOTH GAME OF *GRANDIOSE* DESIGN.
RECENTLY, I HAVE BEEN INVOLVED IN A MORE *MINOR* GAME...
MY *OPPONENT* IN THIS GAME HAS BEEN *SHANG-CHI... MY SON.*
AND *YOU* -- THE MEMBERS OF MY *COUNCIL OF SEVEN* -- HAVE BEEN THE *PAWNS.*
BUT NOW THE GAME HAS *ENDED*--
--AND SHANG-CHI MUST *DIE!!*
"I DID NOT HAVE TIME TO *HIDE* THEM...
HONORABLE *FU MANCHU* TWO MEMBERS OF THE *COUNCIL* --
--LIE UNCONSCIOUS IN THE *HALL.*
WHAT?!!
WHO ARE THE TWO *IMPOSTERS* WHO WOULD SIT AT THIS TABLE?!
WHO--?!
BAMP!
"THE MANNIKIN SLUMPS *FORWARD...*
"... AND I TAKE *LEAVE* OF MY BORROWED *ROBE.*
SHANG-CHI?!!


YES, MY FATHER-- I HAVE COME TO RETURN YOUR GREETINGS...
...AS WELL AS YOUR SAWDUST IMAGE OF ME
IT IS A GIFT I CANNOT ACCEPT.
"THE FIVE ASSASSINS RISE FROM THE TABLE LIKE VIPERS... SILENT, PREPARED TO STRIKE.
KILL HIM!!
"I HAVE LED MY FATHER TO BELIEVE A LIE.
"THE SAWDUST MANNIKIN I HAVE ROBED AND PLACED AT HIS TABLE IN DARKNESS... IS NOT THE ONE WITH WHICH HE EARLIER TAUNTED ME. IT IS A DIFFERENT ONE, DISCOVERED OUTSIDE THIS COUNCIL CHAMBER...
"...BUT I AM NOT IMMUNE TO MY FATHER'S PROPENSITY FOR FLOURISH...
"...AND, TOO, HAVE I LEARNED FROM HIM THAT MANY THINGS MUST BE DONE--
"--PURELY FOR EFFECT.
"AN AXE CLEAVES THE AIR BEHIND ME.
"I MOVE...


"...AND THE AXE CLEAVES THE AIR I HAVE VACATED--
KUHUNK!
"--AND THE TABLE BENEATH IT.
"HE STRUGGLES TO EXTRACT THE BLADE...
KHROOF!
"...YET TOO SLOWLY.
"ANOTHER ONE...
"...SKILLED IN THE ART OF SAMURAI.
"BUT NOT--
"--IN CAUTION.
SWIFFF
TANK!
"I LAUNCH MYSELF ACROSS THE CHAMBER, AND IN THAT FINAL MOMENT I AM NOTHING BUT A LIVING WEAPON--
SWUNK!
"--WHICH EXECUTES A MANEUVER OF SURVIVAL ...THAT RESULTS IN UN-UNWANTED DEATH...
"...AND PROVES MY FATHER SUCCESSFUL IN TRAINING ME TO BE THE EQUAL OF ANY MEMBER IN THE SECRET COUNCIL OF SEVEN.

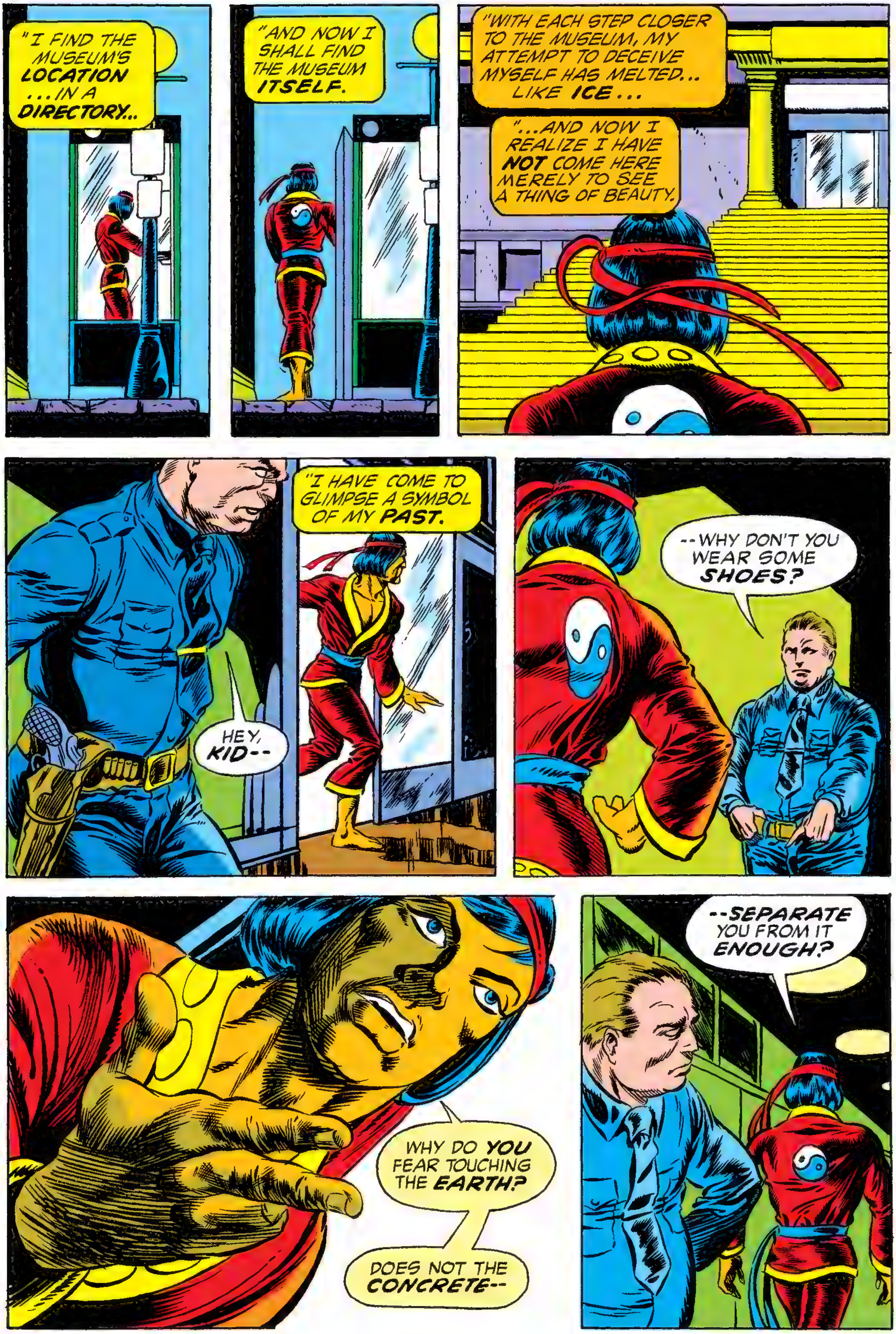

"INNER WEAKNESS ALLOWED ME TO BE BAITED INTO COMING HERE TO CONFRONT MY FATHER.
"IT RESULTED ONLY IN PAIN FOR THOSE I NEITHER HATED, NOR WAS CONCERNED WITH.
CONGRATULATIONS, MY SON, ON SURVIVING THE ANNIVERSARY OF THE DAY OF YOUR BIRTH.
"AND NOW... MY FATHER HAS GONE... ALTHOUGH HIS VOICE REMAINS.
BUT I ASSURE YOU, MY CONGRATULATIONS ARE BUT TEMPORARY-- AS ARE ALL THINGS IN LIFE...
...FOR THE DAY OF YOUR DEATH WILL BE SOON IN ARRIVING.
"HE PLAYS AGAIN MY INNER WEAKNESS--
"-- AND MY RAGE GROWS.
SPATCH!
"IT WAS THE DOOR TO MY FATHER'S PRIVATE CHAMBERS...
"...NOW OCCUPIED ONLY BY THE WOMAN KNOWN AS DUCHARME.
YOUR FATHER... HAS JUST LEFT, SHANG-CHI...
...PERHAPS YOU MAY STILL... CATCH HIM...
"THE NIGHT SKY IS FILLED WITH THE SOUND OF --
"-- A HELICOPTER.
"THE SOUND FADES. IT RECEDES INTO THE DISTANCE...
"...TRANSPORTING THE OBJECT OF MY RAGE BEYOND REACH.
YOU HAVE PERFORMED WELL, PILOT. AND NOW WE JOURNEY TO THE HEART OF AMERICA...
...TO STILL IT, FOREVER.
"AND I WONDER AT MY FATHER'S DESTINATION... FOR THAT IS WHERE I WOULD DIRECT MY RAGE."
FIN

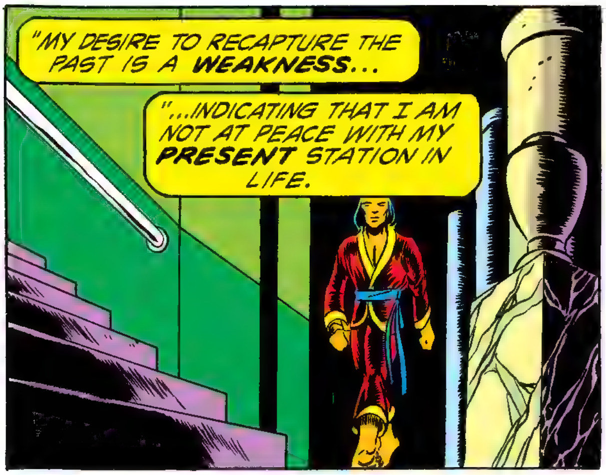


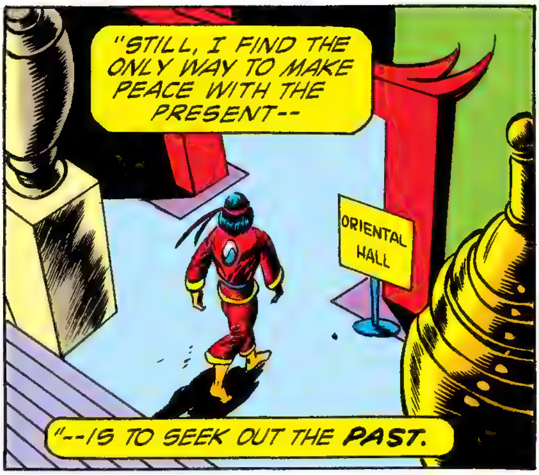
"THIS PLACE, CALLED MIAMI, FINDS LIFE IN THE SEA WINDS...
"...AS THE WINDS THEMSELVES FIND LIFE, AND SUBSTANCE, IN THAT WHICH THEY TOUCH.
"LOOKING AT THE PAPER, I AM ABLE TO SEE THE WIND...
"...AND GRASP ITS LIFE.
"THE PAPER, TOO, HAS A LIFE OF ITS OWN.
WAR.
"IT IS FOUND IN... WORDS.
"KNOWING THAT WORDS ARE THE TOOLS OF COMMUNICATION, IS IT NOT STRANGE THAT THESE TOOLS EXIST IN SO MANY FORMS...A DIFFERENT FORM FOR EACH REGION OF THE WORLD...?
"WOULD IT NOT AID UNIVERSAL COMMUNICATION IF A SINGLE SYSTEM OF TOOLS WERE EMPLOYED... FAMILIAR TO ALL NATIONS...?
iami Hera
CIOUS RELIGIOUS STATUE ON EXHIBIT AT MUSEUM
"STILL, I HAVE STUDIED MANY LANGUAGES. THE WORDS ON THIS PAPER ARE UNDERSTOOD BY ME...
"...BUT THE PICTURE COMMUNICATES MORE THAN ALL THE WORDS IN THEIR COMBINED ESSENCE.

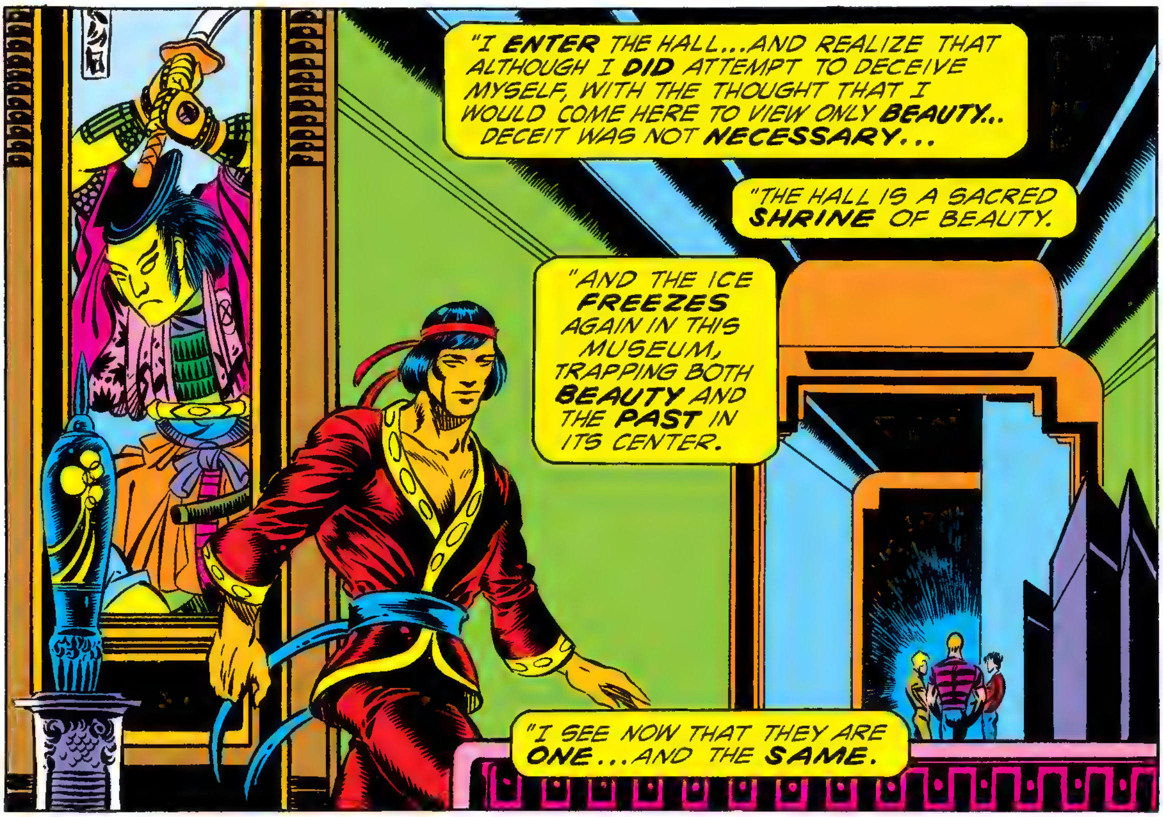
FROZEN PAST, SHATTERED MEMORIES

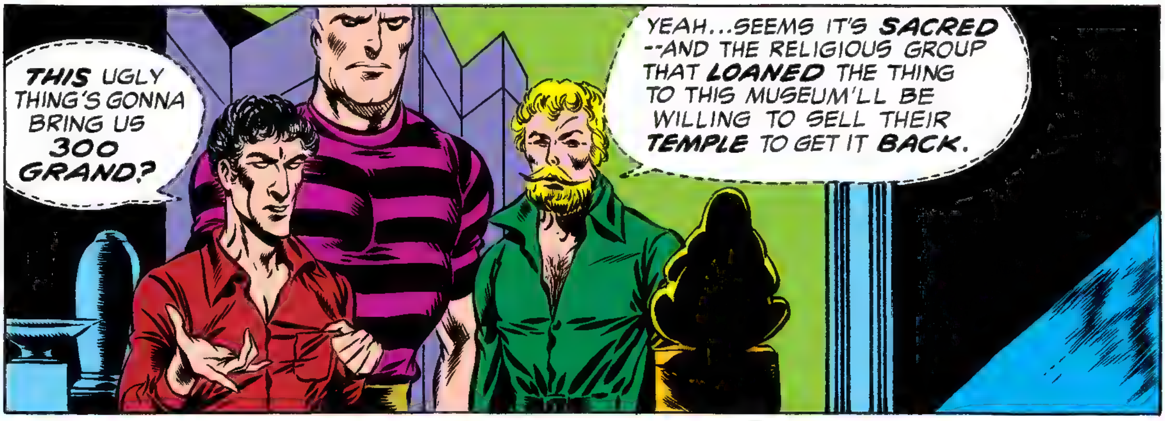
DOUG MOENCH STORY **CRAIG RUSSELL** ART

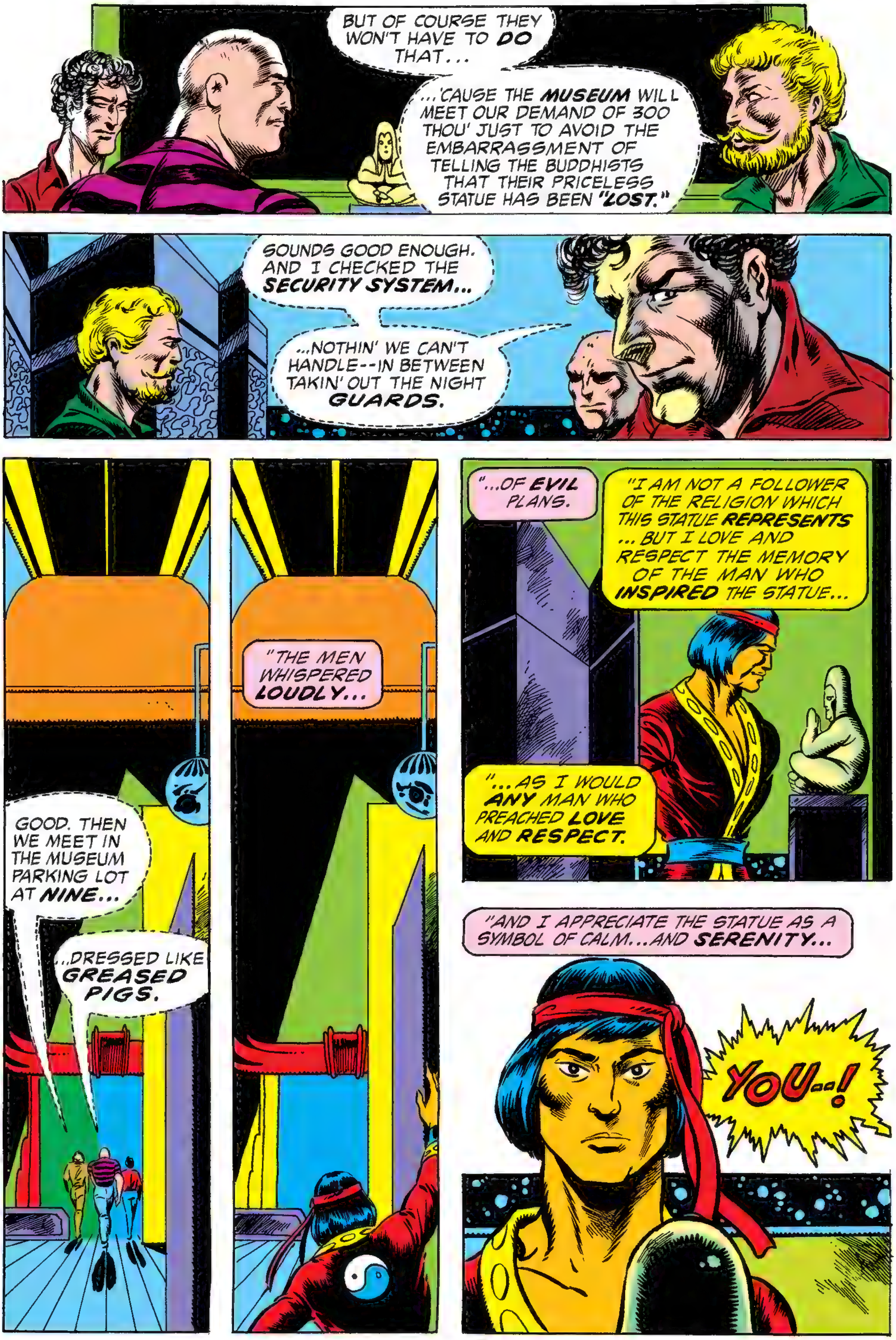

"I FIND THE MUSEUM'S **LOCATION** ...IN A **DIRECTORY**...
"AND NOW I SHALL FIND THE MUSEUM **ITSELF**.
"WITH EACH STEP CLOSER TO THE MUSEUM, MY ATTEMPT TO DECEIVE MYSELF HAS MELTED... LIKE **ICE**...
"...AND NOW I REALIZE I HAVE **NOT** COME HERE MERELY TO SEE A THING OF BEAUTY.
"I HAVE COME TO GLIMPSE A SYMBOL OF MY **PAST**.
HEY, **KID**--
--WHY DON'T YOU WEAR SOME **SHOES?**
WHY DO **YOU** FEAR TOUCHING THE **EARTH?**
DOES NOT THE **CONCRETE**--
--**SEPARATE** YOU FROM IT **ENOUGH?**

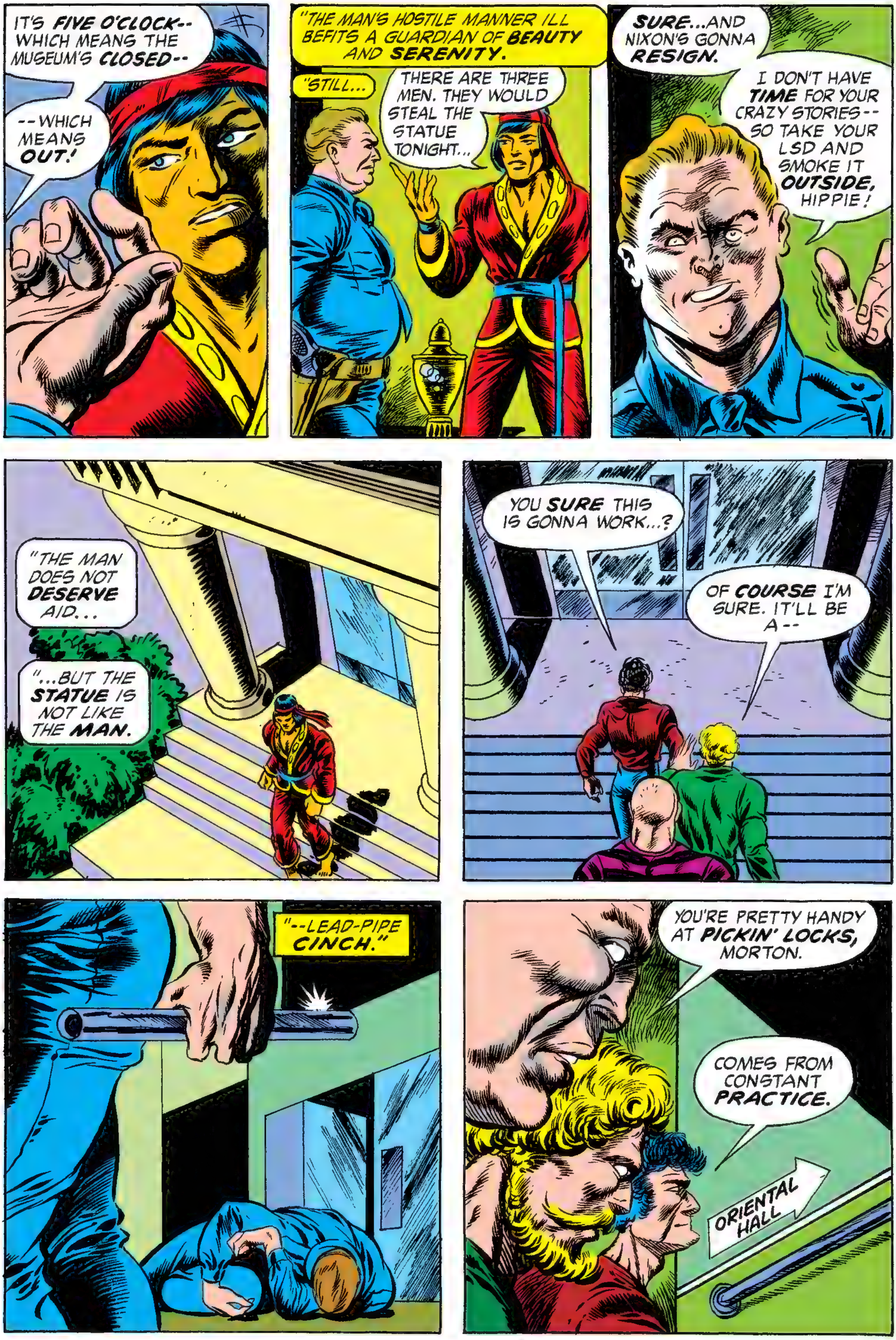

"MY DESIRE TO RECAPTURE THE PAST IS A **WEAKNESS**...
"...INDICATING THAT I AM NOT AT PEACE WITH MY **PRESENT** STATION IN LIFE.

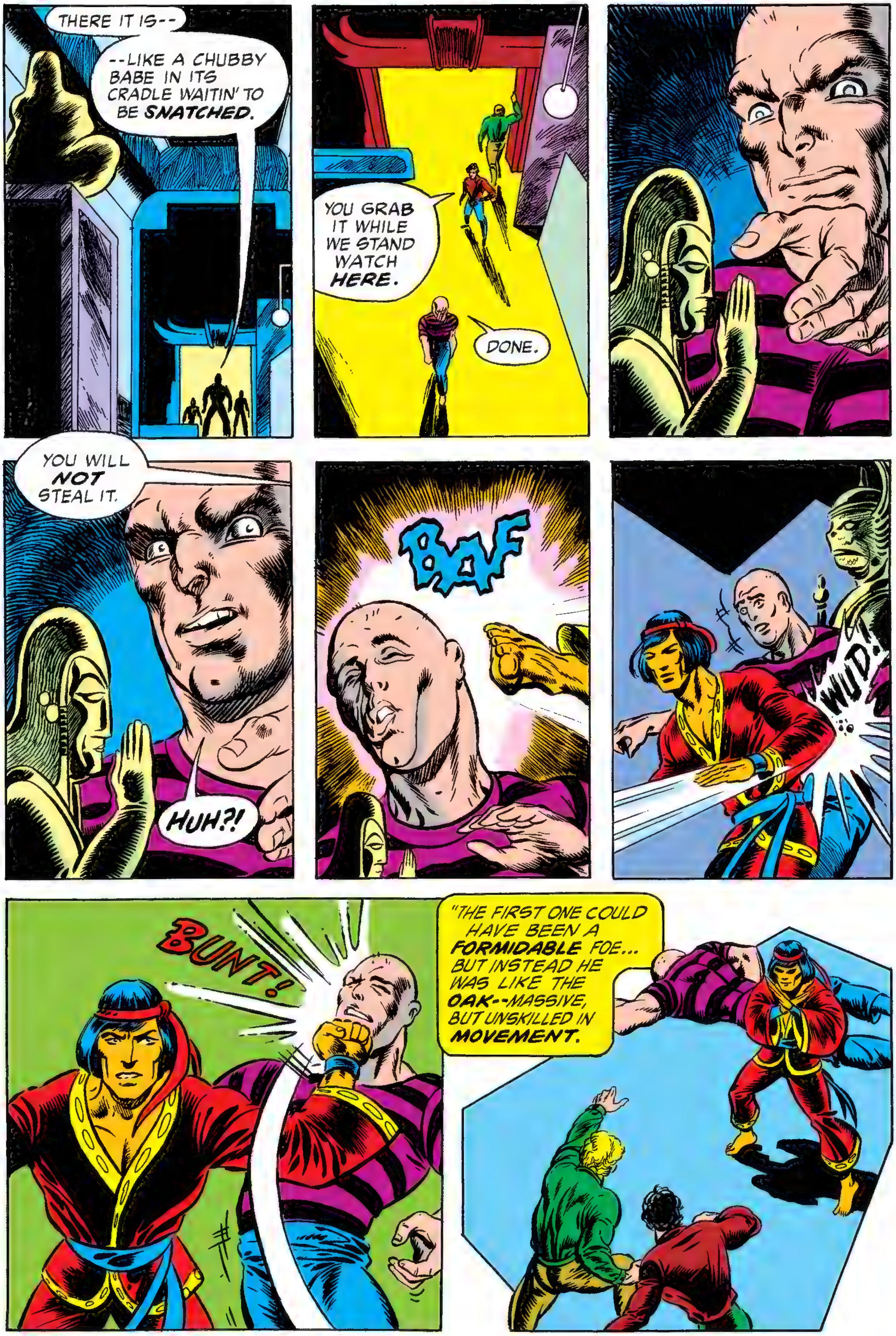

"STILL, I FIND THE ONLY WAY TO MAKE PEACE WITH THE PRESENT--
ORIENTAL HALL
"--IS TO SEEK OUT THE **PAST**.

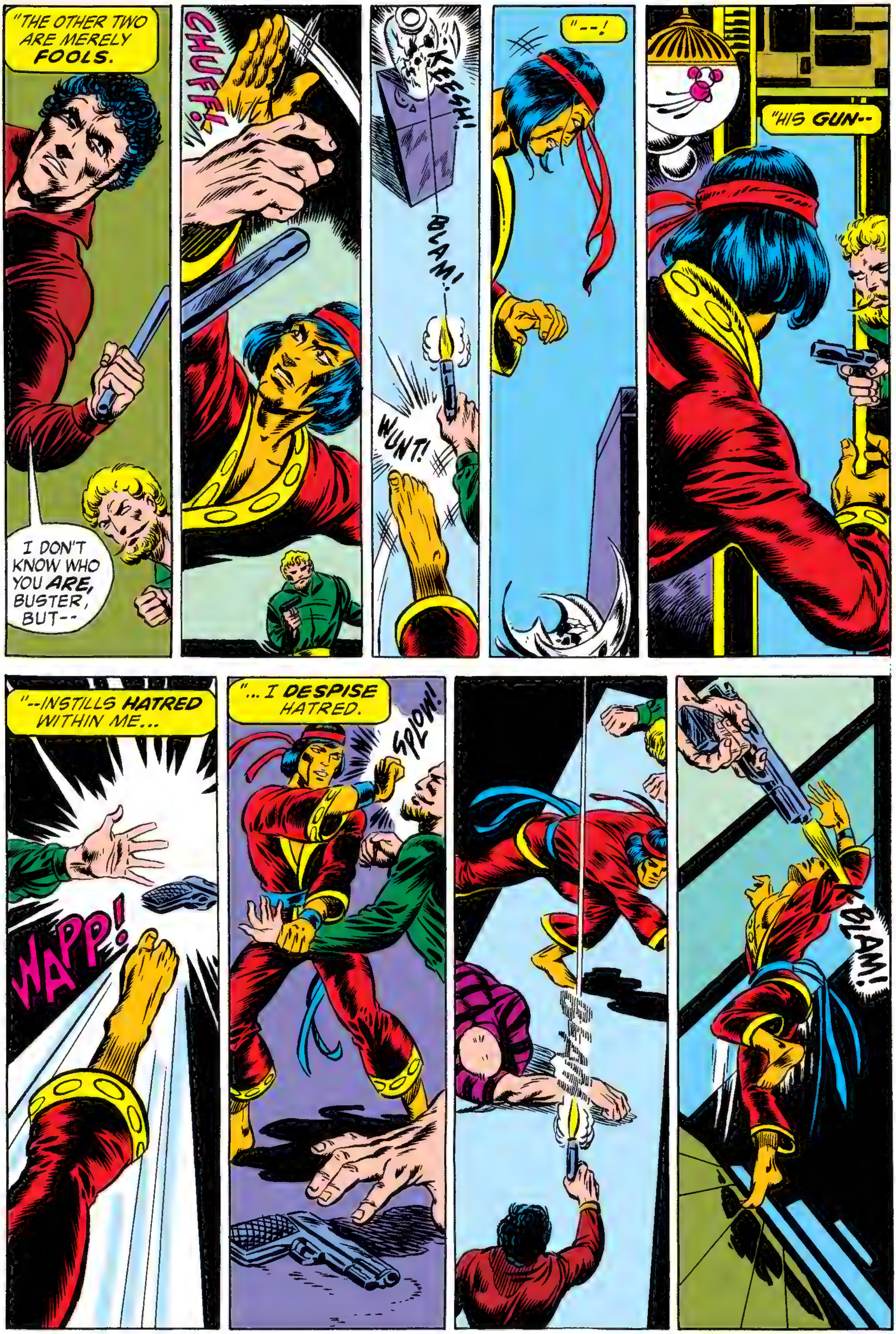

"I **ENTER** THE HALL...AND REALIZE THAT ALTHOUGH I **DID** ATTEMPT TO DECEIVE MYSELF, WITH THE THOUGHT THAT I WOULD COME HERE TO VIEW ONLY **BEAUTY**.. DECEIT WAS NOT **NECESSARY**...
"THE HALL IS A SACRED **SHRINE** OF BEAUTY.
"AND THE ICE **FREEZES** AGAIN IN THIS MUSEUM, TRAPPING BOTH **BEAUTY** AND THE **PAST** IN ITS CENTER.
"I SEE NOW THAT THEY ARE **ONE**...AND THE **SAME**.

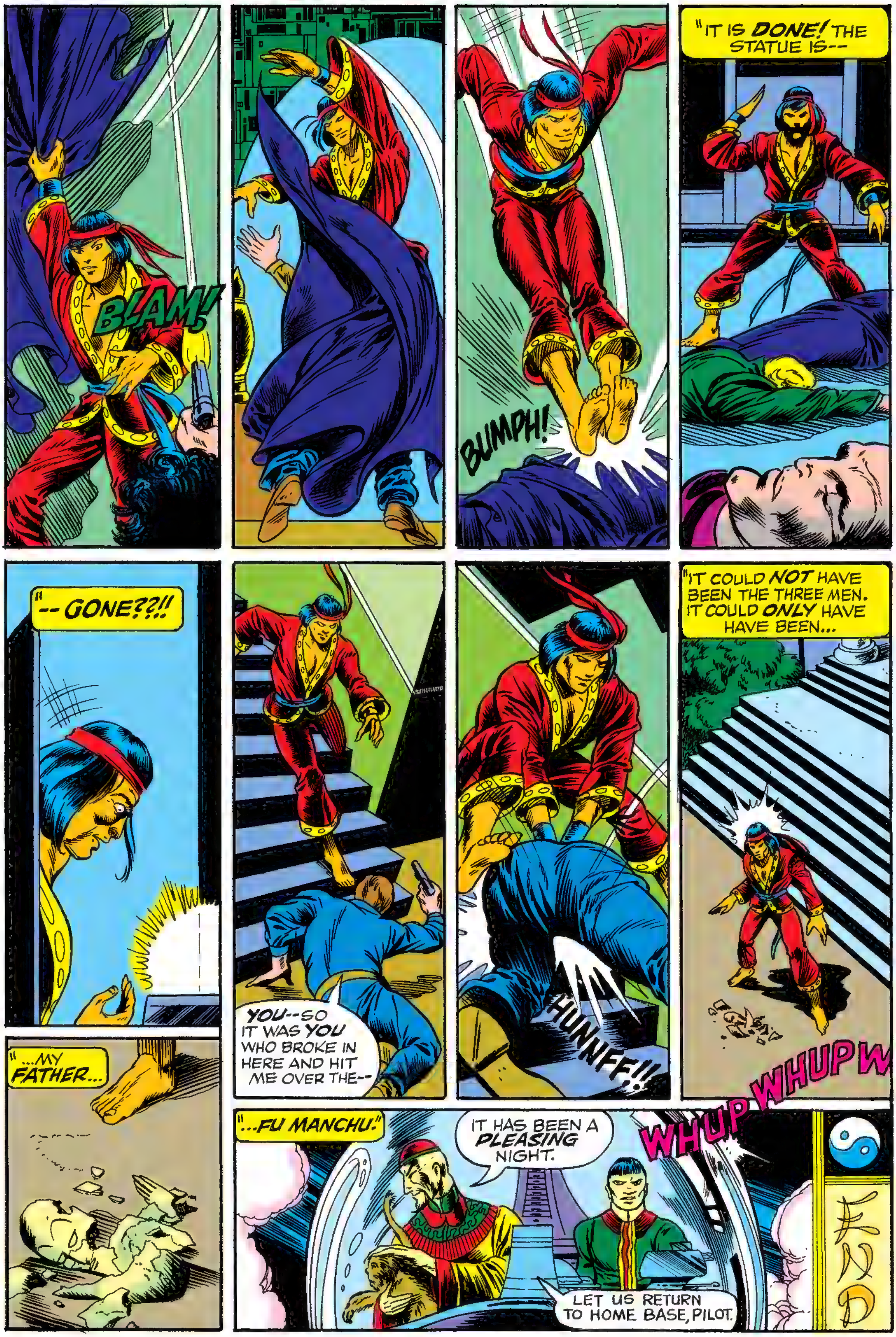

THIS UGLY THING'S GONNA BRING US **300 GRAND**?
YEAH...SEEMS IT'S **SACRED** --AND THE RELIGIOUS GROUP THAT **LOANED** THE THING TO THIS MUSEUM'LL BE WILLING TO SELL THEIR **TEMPLE** TO GET IT **BACK**.


BUT OF COURSE THEY WON'T HAVE TO DO THAT...
...'CAUSE THE MUSEUM WILL MEET OUR DEMAND OF 300 THOU' JUST TO AVOID THE EMBARRASSMENT OF TELLING THE BUDDHISTS THAT THEIR PRICELESS STATUE HAS BEEN "LOST."
SOUNDS GOOD ENOUGH. AND I CHECKED THE SECURITY SYSTEM...
...NOTHIN' WE CAN'T HANDLE--IN BETWEEN TAKIN' OUT THE NIGHT GUARDS.
GOOD. THEN WE MEET IN THE MUSEUM PARKING LOT AT NINE...
...DRESSED LIKE GREASED PIGS.
"THE MEN WHISPERED LOUDLY...
"...OF EVIL PLANS.
"I AM NOT A FOLLOWER OF THE RELIGION WHICH THIS STATUE REPRESENTS ... BUT I LOVE AND RESPECT THE MEMORY OF THE MAN WHO INSPIRED THE STATUE...
"...AS I WOULD ANY MAN WHO PREACHED LOVE AND RESPECT.
"AND I APPRECIATE THE STATUE AS A SYMBOL OF CALM...AND SERENITY...
YOU--!


IT'S FIVE O'CLOCK-- WHICH MEANS THE MUSEUM'S CLOSED--
--WHICH MEANS OUT!
"THE MAN'S HOSTILE MANNER ILL BEFITS A GUARDIAN OF BEAUTY AND SERENITY.
"STILL...
THERE ARE THREE MEN. THEY WOULD STEAL THE STATUE TONIGHT...
SURE...AND NIXON'S GONNA RESIGN.
I DON'T HAVE TIME FOR YOUR CRAZY STORIES-- SO TAKE YOUR LSD AND SMOKE IT OUTSIDE, HIPPIE!
"THE MAN DOES NOT DESERVE AID...
"...BUT THE STATUE IS NOT LIKE THE MAN.
YOU SURE THIS IS GONNA WORK...?
OF COURSE I'M SURE. IT'LL BE A--
"--LEAD-PIPE CINCH."
YOU'RE PRETTY HANDY AT PICKIN' LOCKS, MORTON.
COMES FROM CONSTANT PRACTICE.
ORIENTAL HALL


THERE IT IS--
--LIKE A CHUBBY BABE IN ITS CRADLE WAITIN' TO BE SNATCHED.
YOU GRAB IT WHILE WE STAND WATCH HERE.
DONE.
YOU WILL NOT STEAL IT.
HUH?!
BAF
WUD!
BUNT!
"THE FIRST ONE COULD HAVE BEEN A FORMIDABLE FOE... BUT INSTEAD HE WAS LIKE THE OAK--MASSIVE, BUT UNSKILLED IN MOVEMENT.


"THE OTHER TWO ARE MERELY **FOOLS**.
I DON'T KNOW WHO YOU **ARE**, BUSTER, BUT--
CHUFF!
KEESH!
BLAM!
WUNT!
"--!
"HIS **GUN**--
"--INSTILLS **HATRED** WITHIN ME...
WAPP!
"...I **DESPISE** HATRED.
SPLOW!
K-BLAM!


BLAM!
BUMPH!
"IT IS DONE! THE STATUE IS--
"--GONE??!!
YOU--SO IT WAS YOU WHO BROKE IN HERE AND HIT ME OVER THE--
HUNNFF!!
"IT COULD NOT HAVE BEEN THE THREE MEN. IT COULD ONLY HAVE HAVE BEEN...
"...MY FATHER...
"...FU MANCHU."
IT HAS BEEN A PLEASING NIGHT.
WHUP WHUP WHUPW
LET US RETURN TO HOME BASE, PILOT.
END

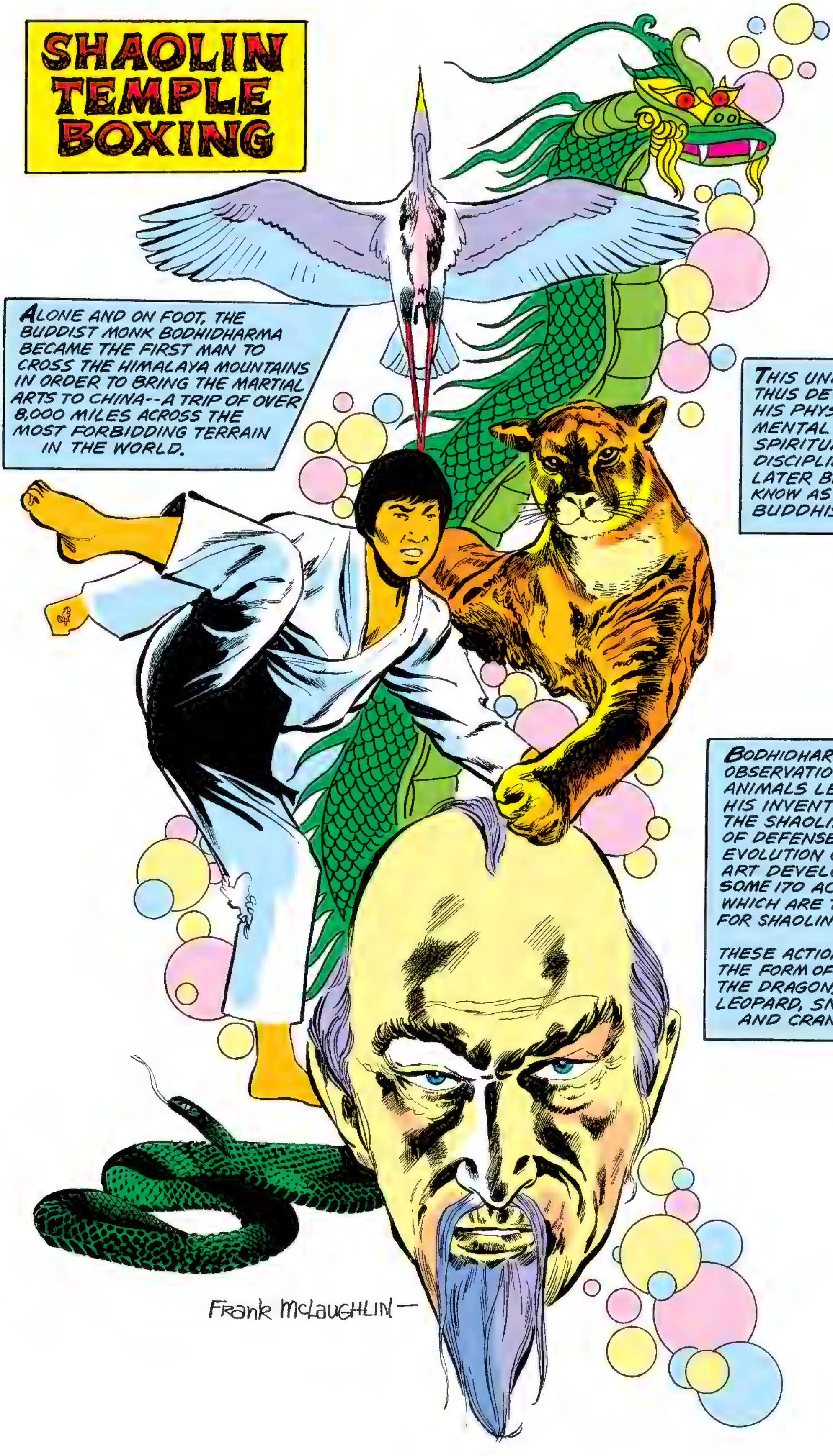
SHAOLIN TEMPLE BOXING

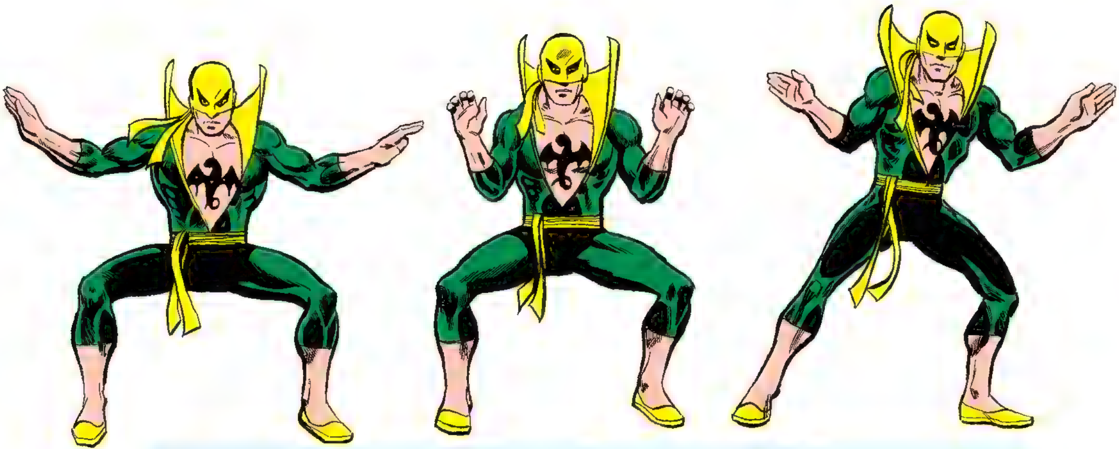
ALONE AND ON FOOT, THE BUDDIST MONK BODHIDHARMA BECAME THE FIRST MAN TO CROSS THE HIMALAYA MOUNTAINS IN ORDER TO BRING THE MARTIAL ARTS TO CHINA--A TRIP OF OVER 8,000 MILES ACROSS THE MOST FORBIDDING TERRAIN IN THE WORLD.

THIS UNIQUE MAN THUS DEVELOPED HIS PHYSICAL, MENTAL AND SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINE WHICH LATER BECAME KNOW AS ZEN BUDDHISM.

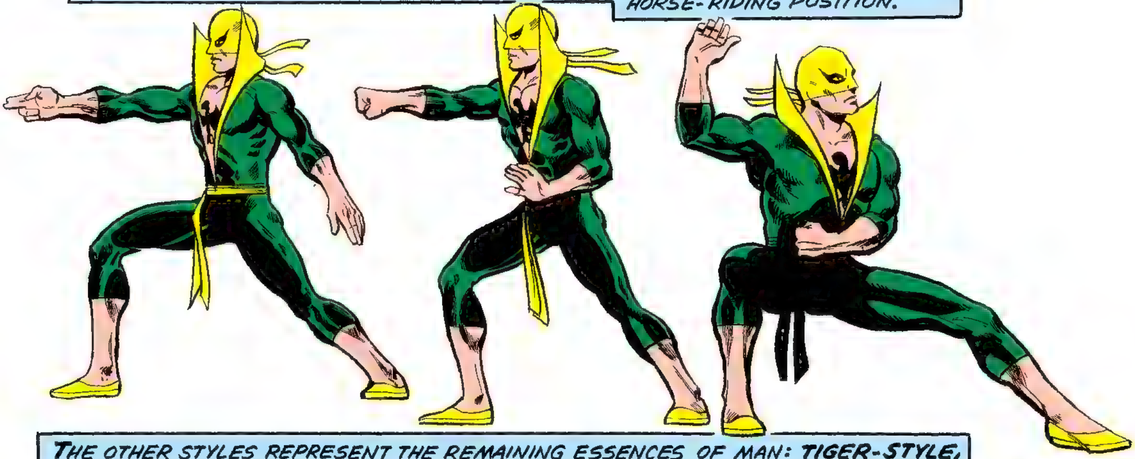
BODHIDHARMA'S CLOSE OBSERVATION OF ANIMALS LED TO HIS INVENTION OF THE SHAOLIN SYSTEM OF DEFENSE. LATER EVOLUTION OF THE ART DEVELOPED SOME 170 ACTIONS WHICH ARE THE BASIS FOR SHAOLIN TODAY.

THESE ACTIONS TOOK THE FORM OF STYLES: THE DRAGON, TIGER, LEOPARD, SNAKE, AND CRANE.


Frank McLaughlin—

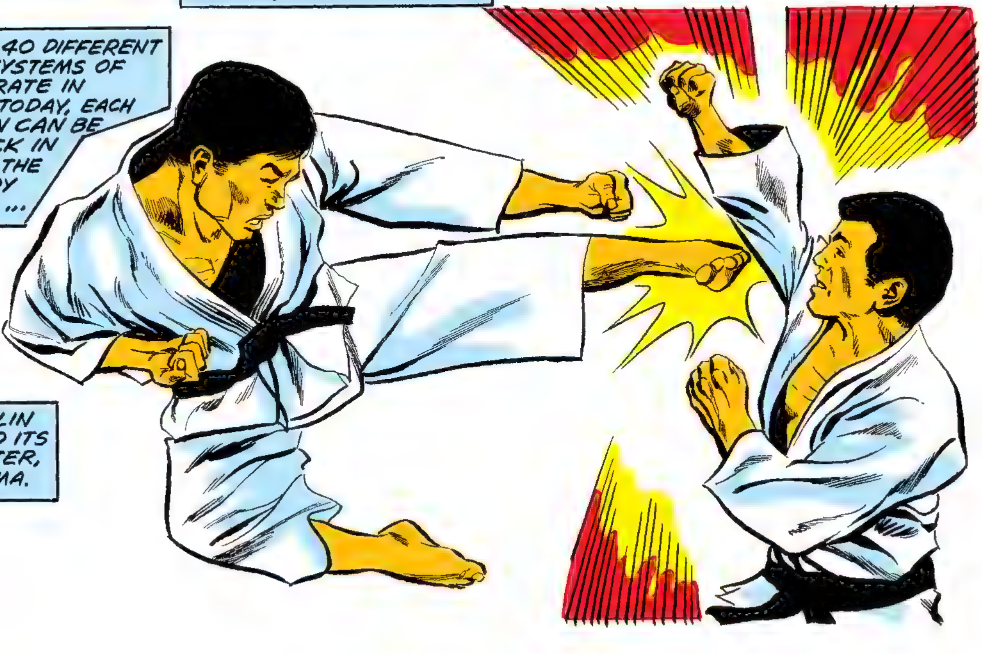


THE DRAGON STYLE ILLUSTRATED HERE REPRESENTS THE CIVILIZATION OF SPIRIT. NO STRENGTH IS USED IN THIS EXCERCISE, WHICH IS MEANT TO REPRESENT A DRAGON FLOATING IN THE AIR, READY TO ATTACK IN ANY DIRECTION. NOTE THE LOW, HORSE-RIDING POSITION.

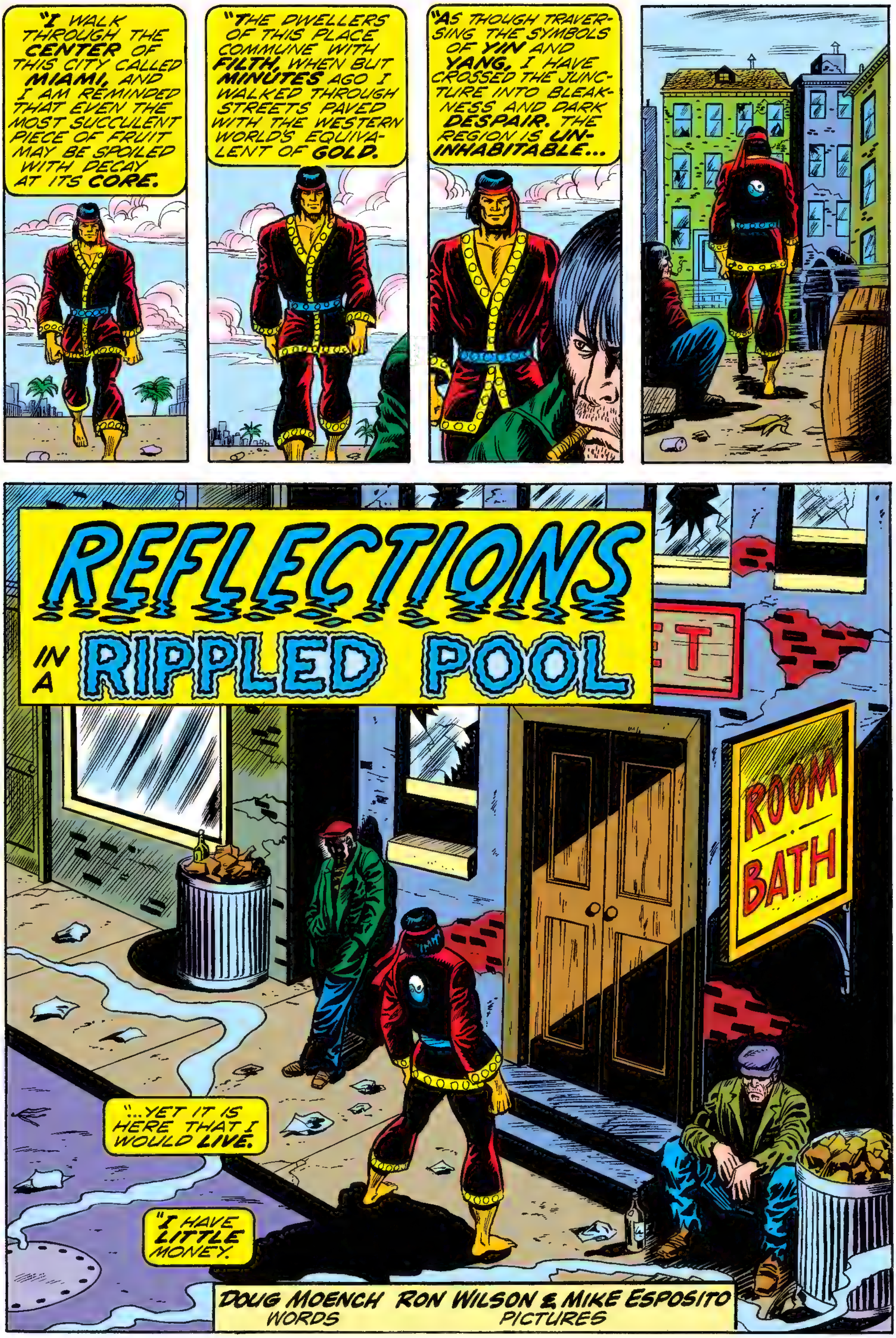


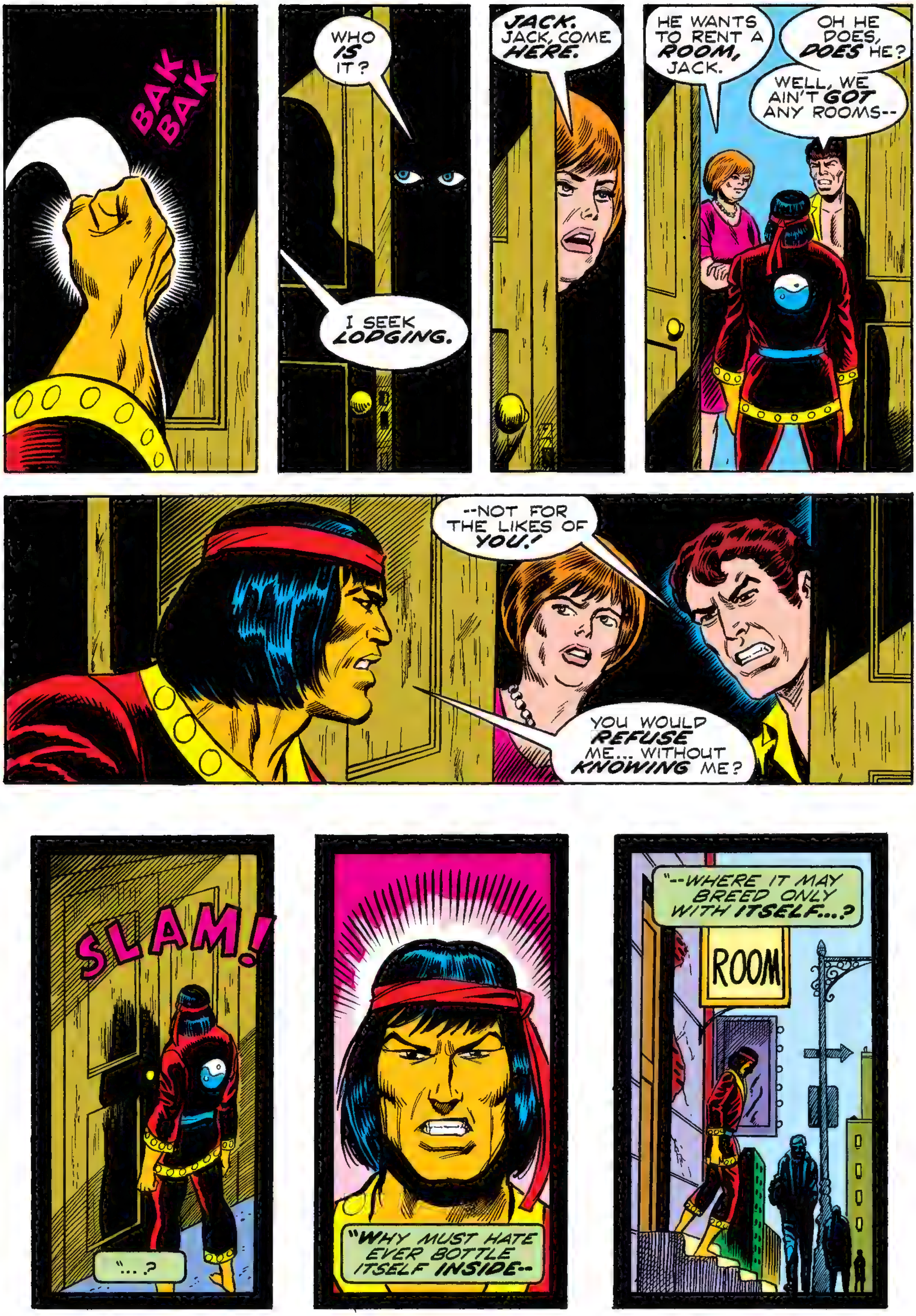
THE OTHER STYLES REPRESENT THE REMAINING ESSENCES OF MAN: **TIGER-STYLE**, THE TRAINING OF BONES; **LEOPARD STYLE**, THE DEVELOPMENT OF STRENGTH; **SNAKE STYLE**, THE CULTIVATION OF CH'I OR LIFE FORCE; AND **CRANE STYLE**, SINEW TRAINING.

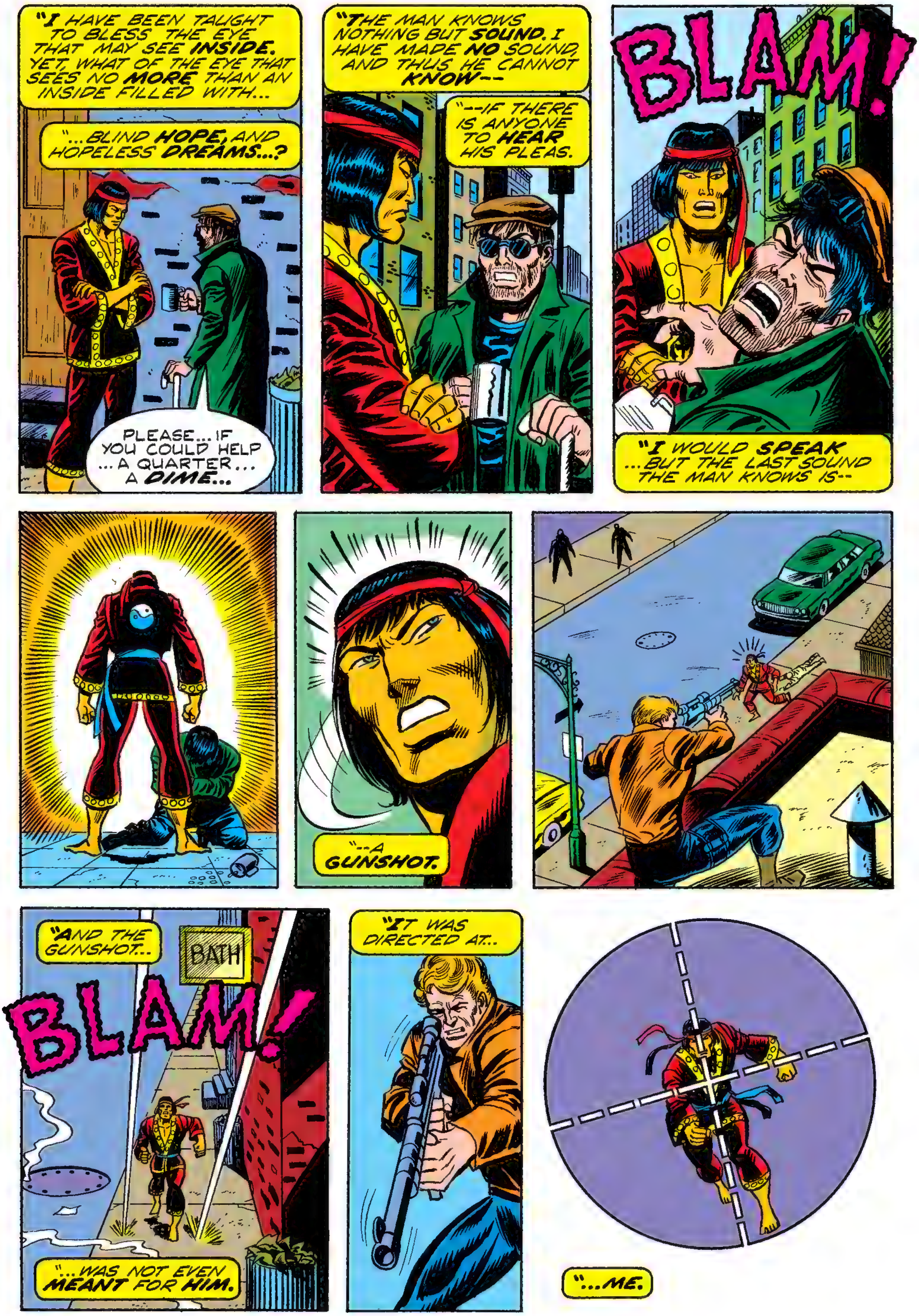
WITH OVER 40 DIFFERENT STYLES OR SYSTEMS OF MODERN KARATE IN EXISTENCE TODAY, EACH ONE'S ORIGIN CAN BE TRACED BACK IN HISTORY TO THE GRAND DADDY OF THEM ALL ...

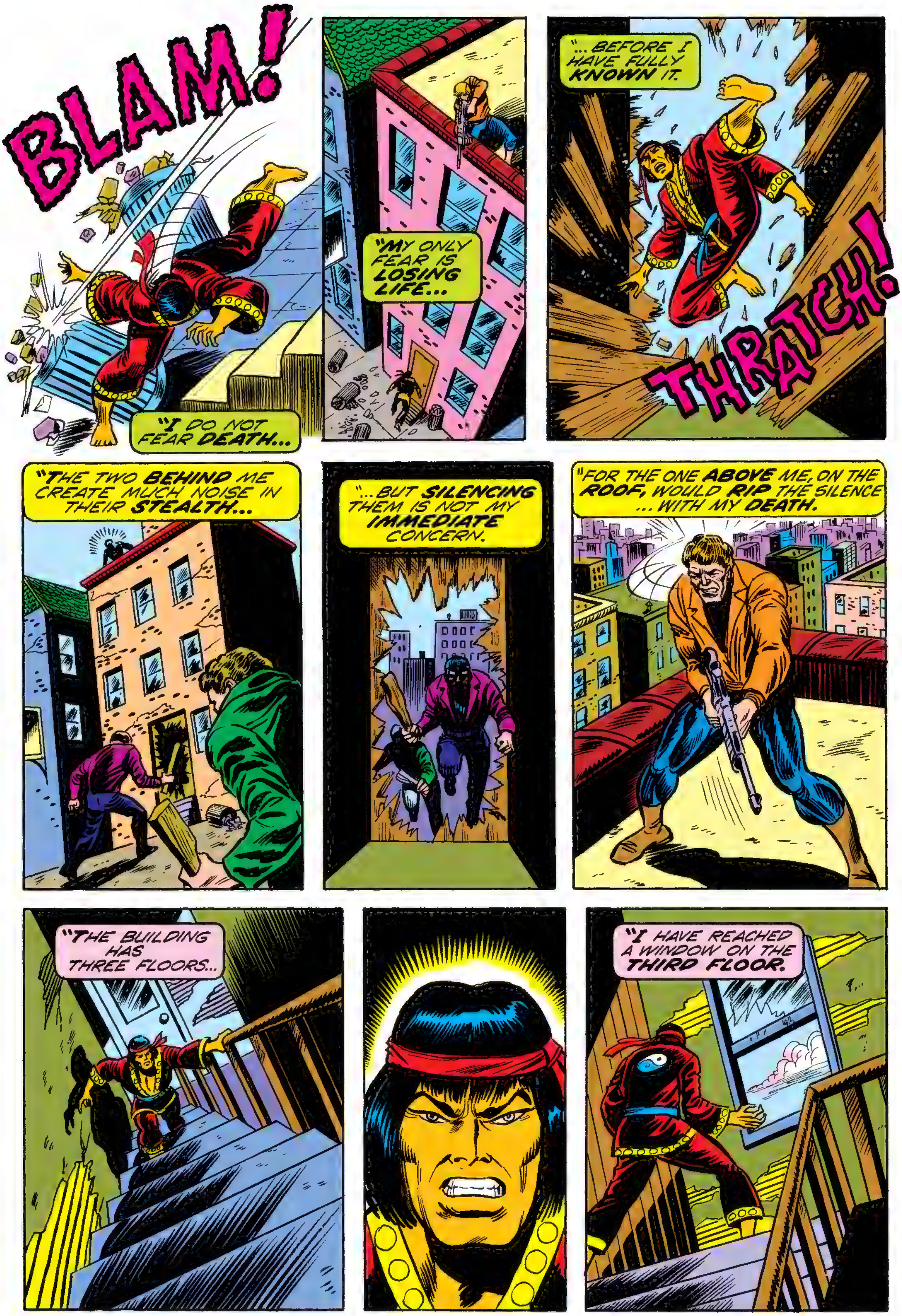


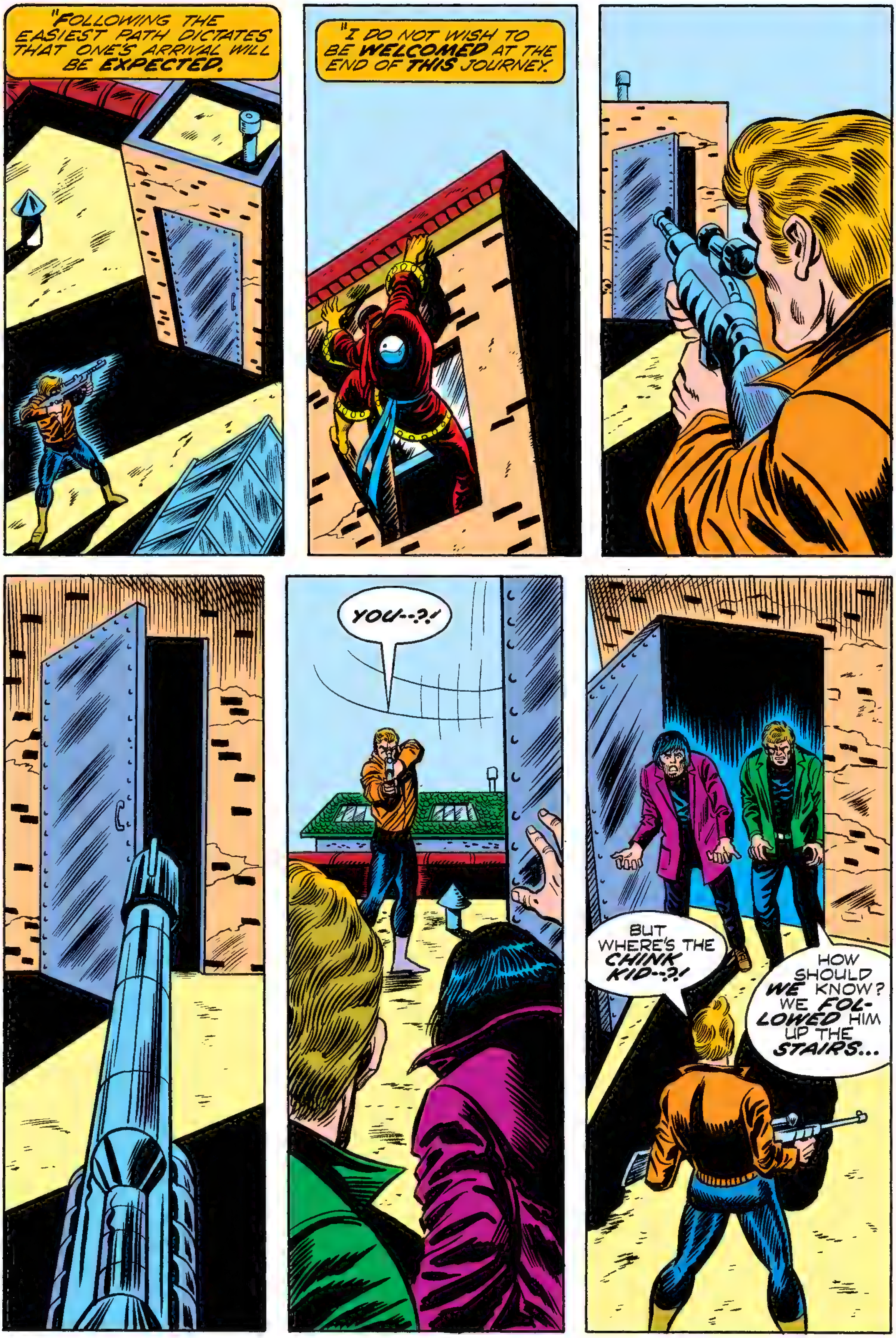
...THE SHAOLIN SYSTEM AND ITS GRAND MASTER, BODHIDHARMA.

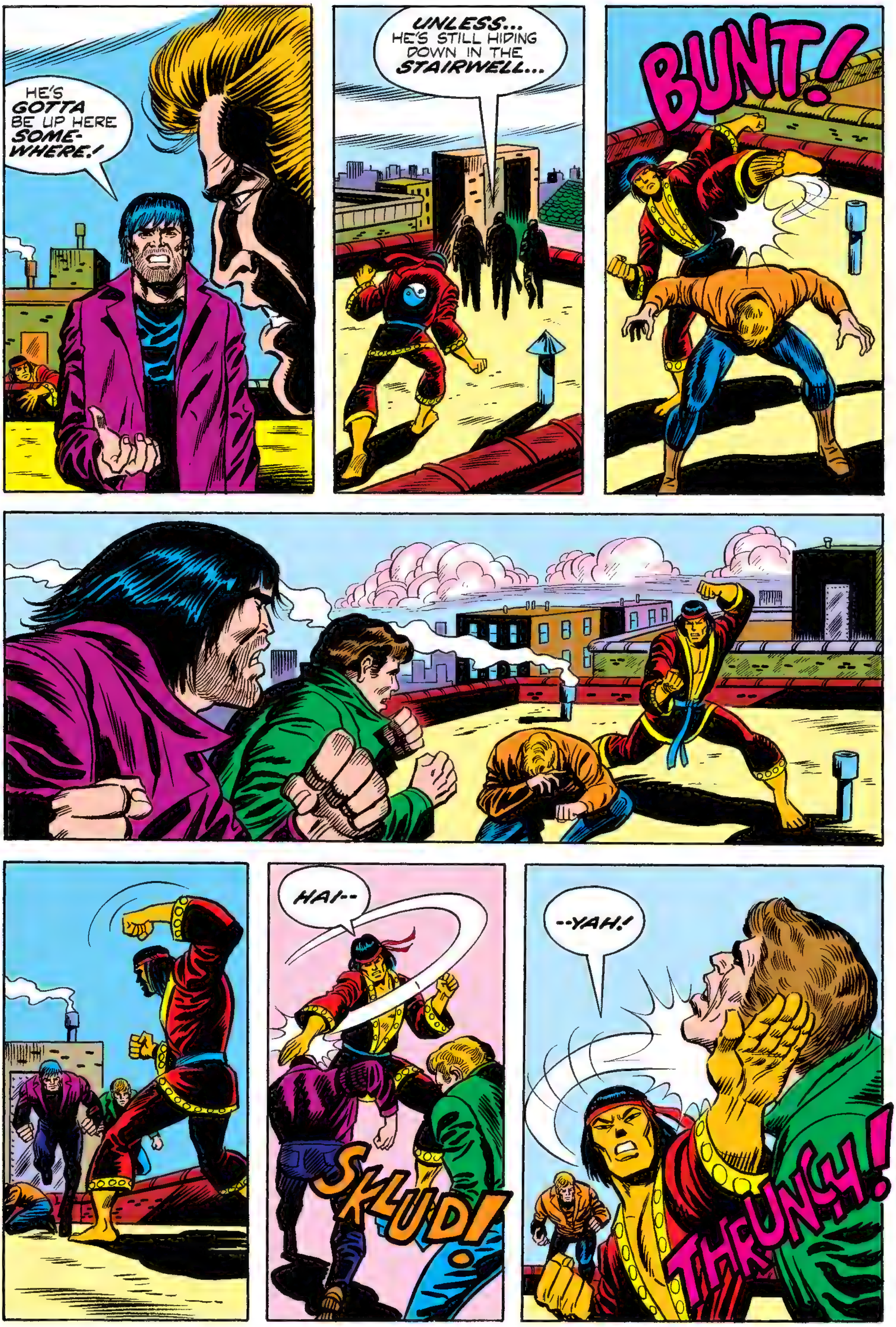

"I WALK THROUGH THE CENTER OF THIS CITY CALLED MIAMI, AND I AM REMINDED THAT EVEN THE MOST SUCCULENT PIECE OF FRUIT MAY BE SPOILED WITH DECAY AT ITS CORE.
"THE DWELLERS OF THIS PLACE COMMUNE WITH FILTH, WHEN BUT MINUTES AGO I WALKED THROUGH STREETS PAVED WITH THE WESTERN WORLD'S EQUIVALENT OF GOLD.
"AS THOUGH TRAVERSING THE SYMBOLS OF YIN AND YANG, I HAVE CROSSED THE JUNCTURE INTO BLEAKNESS AND DARK DESPAIR. THE REGION IS UNINHABITABLE...
REFLECTIONS IN A RIPPLED POOL
ET
ROOM • BATH
"...YET IT IS HERE THAT I WOULD LIVE.
"I HAVE LITTLE MONEY.
DOUG MOENCH WORDS
RON WILSON & MIKE ESPOSITO PICTURES

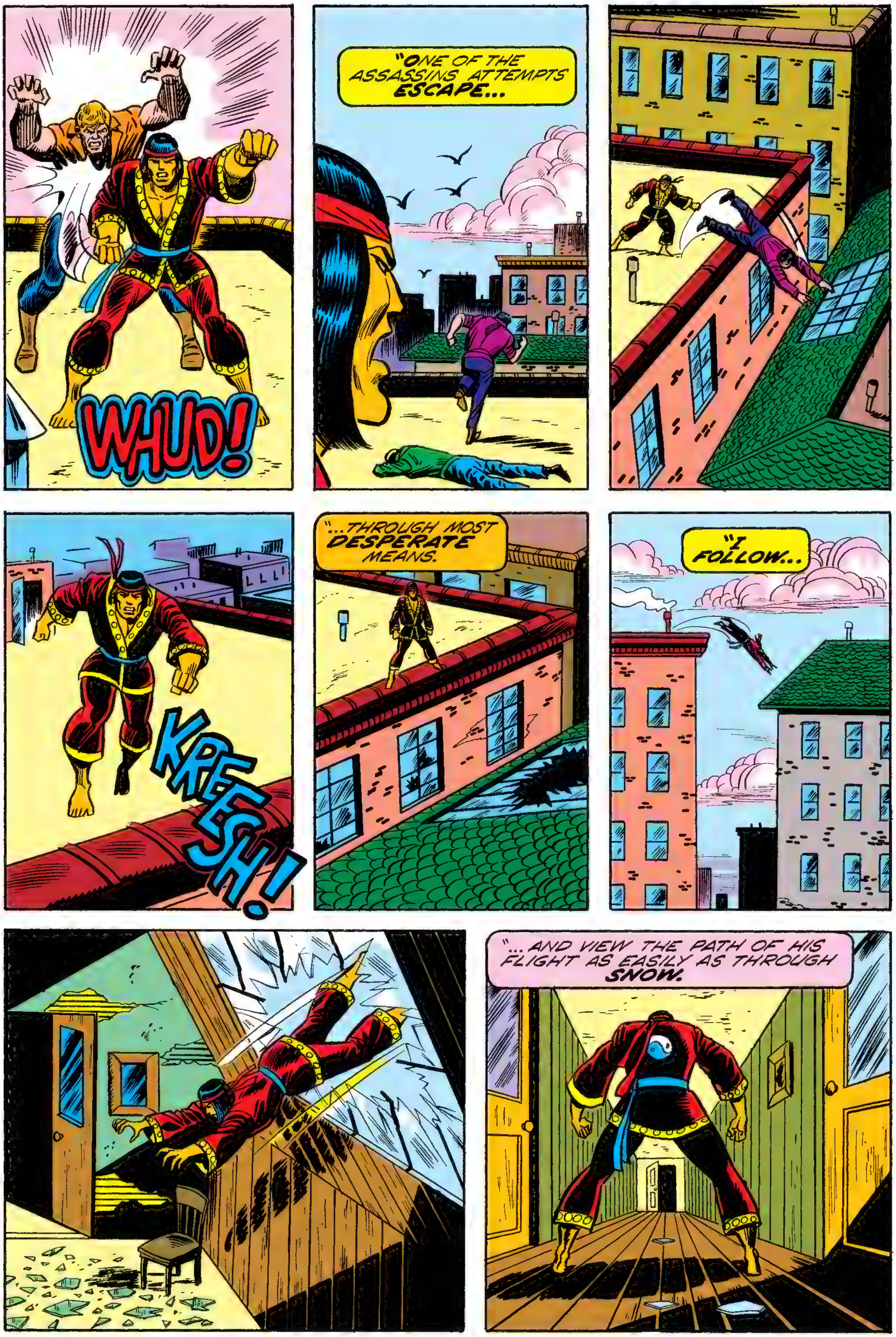

BAK BAK
WHO IS IT?
I SEEK LODGING.
JACK. JACK, COME HERE.
HE WANTS TO RENT A ROOM, JACK.
OH HE DOES, DOES HE?
WELL, WE AIN'T GOT ANY ROOMS--
--NOT FOR THE LIKES OF YOU!
YOU WOULD REFUSE ME... WITHOUT KNOWING ME?
SLAM!
"... ?
"WHY MUST HATE EVER BOTTLE ITSELF INSIDE--
"--WHERE IT MAY BREED ONLY WITH ITSELF...?
ROOM

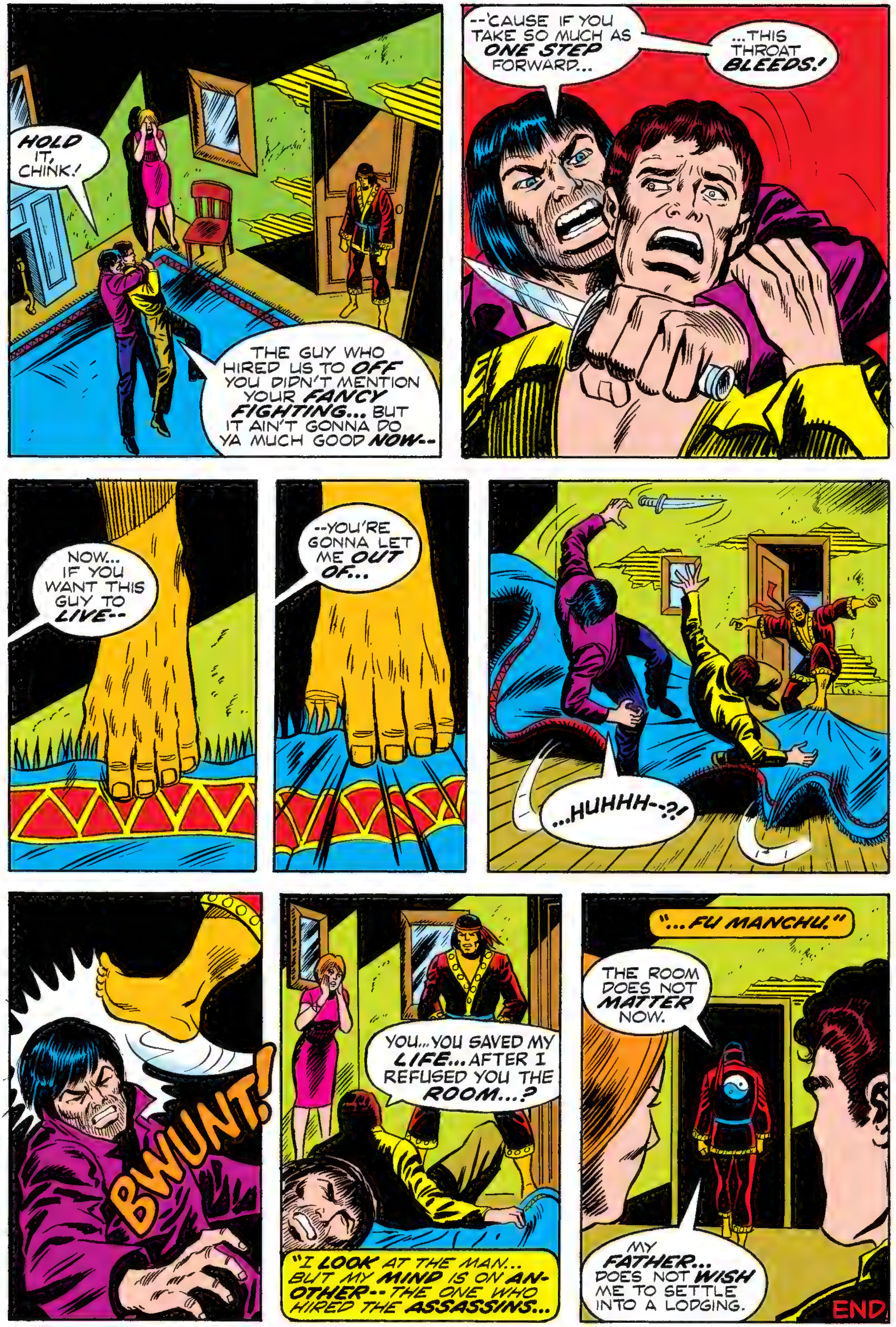

"I HAVE BEEN TAUGHT TO BLESS THE EYE THAT MAY SEE **INSIDE.** YET, WHAT OF THE EYE THAT SEES NO **MORE** THAN AN INSIDE FILLED WITH...
"...BLIND **HOPE,** AND HOPELESS **DREAMS...?**
PLEASE... IF YOU COULD HELP ...A QUARTER... A **DIME...**
"THE MAN KNOWS NOTHING BUT **SOUND.** I HAVE MADE **NO** SOUND, AND THUS HE CANNOT **KNOW--**
"--IF THERE IS ANYONE TO **HEAR** HIS PLEAS.
BLAM!
"I WOULD **SPEAK** ...BUT THE LAST SOUND THE MAN KNOWS IS--
"--A **GUNSHOT.**
"AND THE GUNSHOT...
BATH
BLAM!
"...WAS NOT EVEN **MEANT** FOR **HIM.**
"IT WAS DIRECTED AT...
"...**ME.**

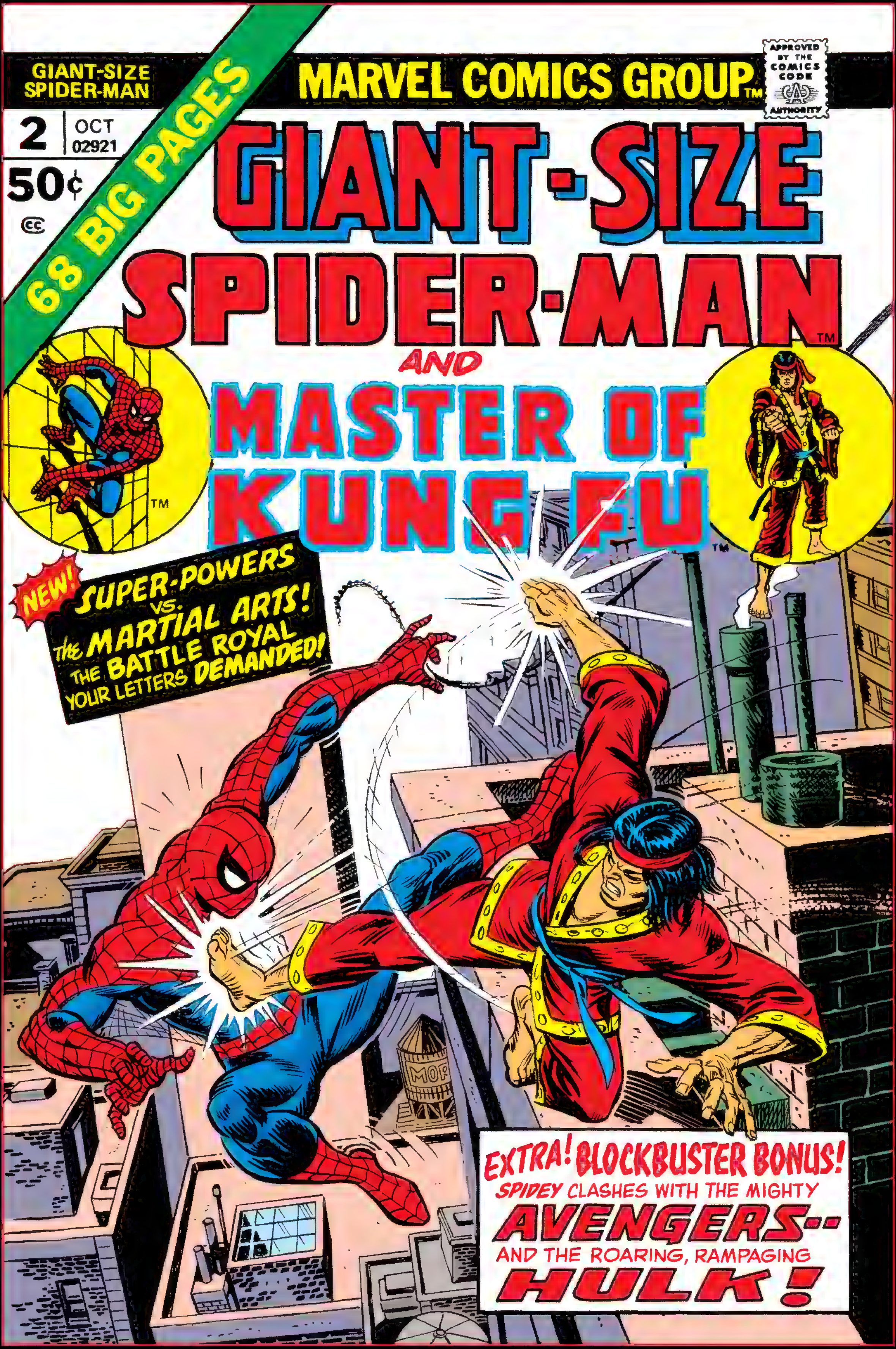

BLAM!
"I DO NOT FEAR DEATH...
"MY ONLY FEAR IS LOSING LIFE...
"...BEFORE I HAVE FULLY KNOWN IT.
THRATCH!
"THE TWO BEHIND ME CREATE MUCH NOISE IN THEIR STEALTH...
"...BUT SILENCING THEM IS NOT MY IMMEDIATE CONCERN.
"FOR THE ONE ABOVE ME, ON THE ROOF, WOULD RIP THE SILENCE ... WITH MY DEATH.
"THE BUILDING HAS THREE FLOORS...
"I HAVE REACHED A WINDOW ON THE THIRD FLOOR.


"FOLLOWING THE EASIEST PATH DICTATES THAT ONE'S ARRIVAL WILL BE **EXPECTED.**
"I DO NOT WISH TO BE **WELCOMED** AT THE END OF **THIS** JOURNEY.
YOU--?!
BUT WHERE'S THE **CHINK KID--?!**
HOW SHOULD **WE** KNOW? WE **FOLLOWED** HIM UP THE **STAIRS...**


HE'S GOTTA BE UP HERE SOME-WHERE!
UNLESS... HE'S STILL HIDING DOWN IN THE STAIRWELL...
BUNT!
HAI--
SKLUD!
--YAH!
THRUNCH!


WHUD!
"ONE OF THE ASSASSINS ATTEMPTS ESCAPE...
KREESH!
"...THROUGH MOST DESPERATE MEANS.
"I FOLLOW...
"...AND VIEW THE PATH OF HIS FLIGHT AS EASILY AS THROUGH SNOW.


HOLD IT, CHINK!
THE GUY WHO HIRED US TO OFF YOU DIDN'T MENTION YOUR FANCY FIGHTING... BUT IT AIN'T GONNA DO YA MUCH GOOD NOW--
--'CAUSE IF YOU TAKE SO MUCH AS ONE STEP FORWARD...
...THIS THROAT BLEEDS!
NOW... IF YOU WANT THIS GUY TO LIVE--
--YOU'RE GONNA LET ME OUT OF...
...HUHHH--?!
BWUNT!
YOU...YOU SAVED MY LIFE... AFTER I REFUSED YOU THE ROOM...?
"I LOOK AT THE MAN... BUT MY MIND IS ON ANOTHER--THE ONE WHO HIRED THE ASSASSINS...
"...FU MANCHU."
THE ROOM DOES NOT MATTER NOW.
MY FATHER... DOES NOT WISH ME TO SETTLE INTO A LODGING.
END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AND
MASTER OF KUNG FU
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SUPER-POWERS VS. THE MARTIAL ARTS! THE BATTLE ROYAL YOUR LETTERS DEMANDED!
MOR
EXTRA! BLOCKBUSTER BONUS!
SPIDEY CLASHES WITH THE MIGHTY AVENGERS--
AND THE ROARING, RAMPAGING HULK!

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MASTERSTROKE!

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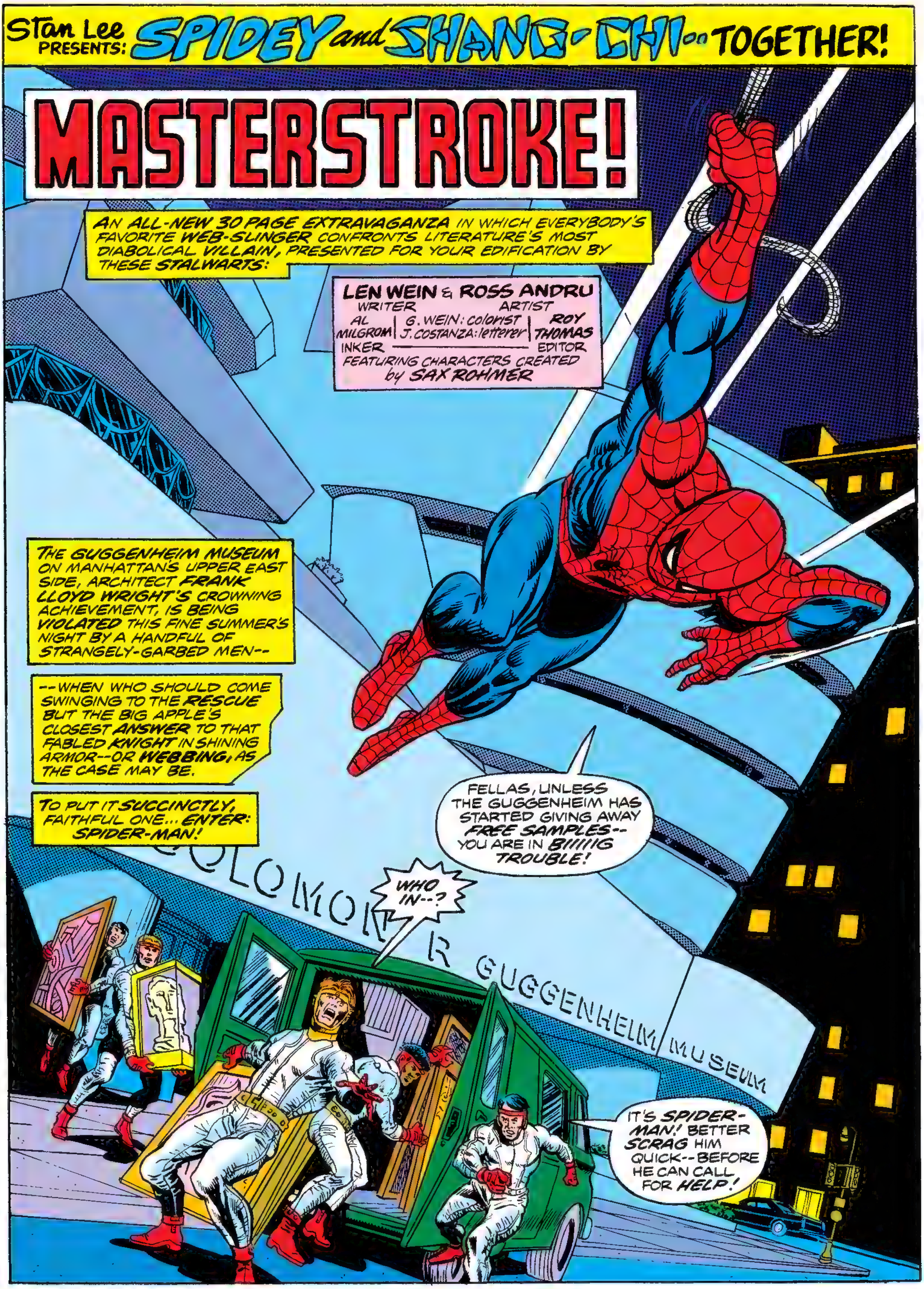
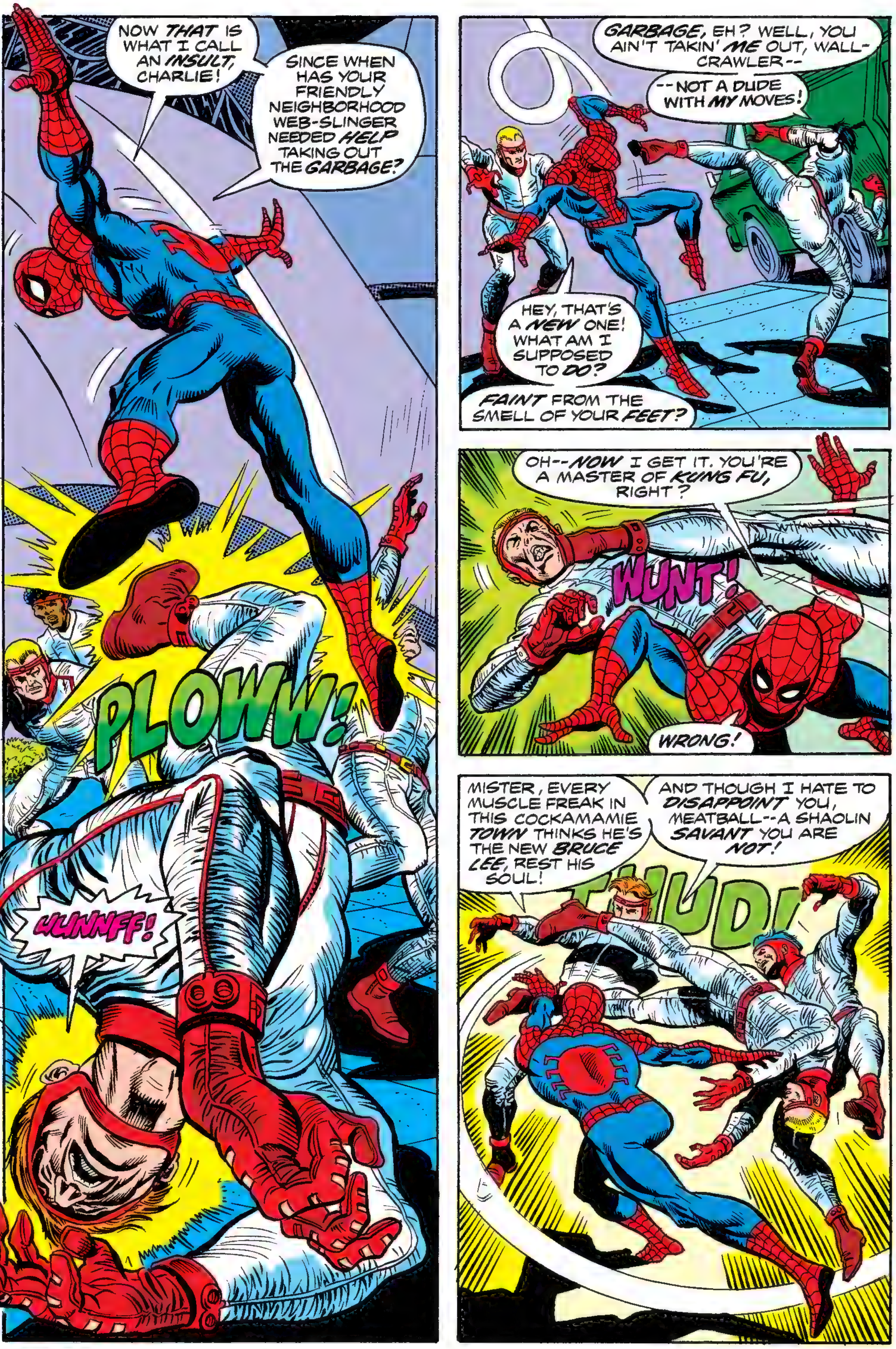
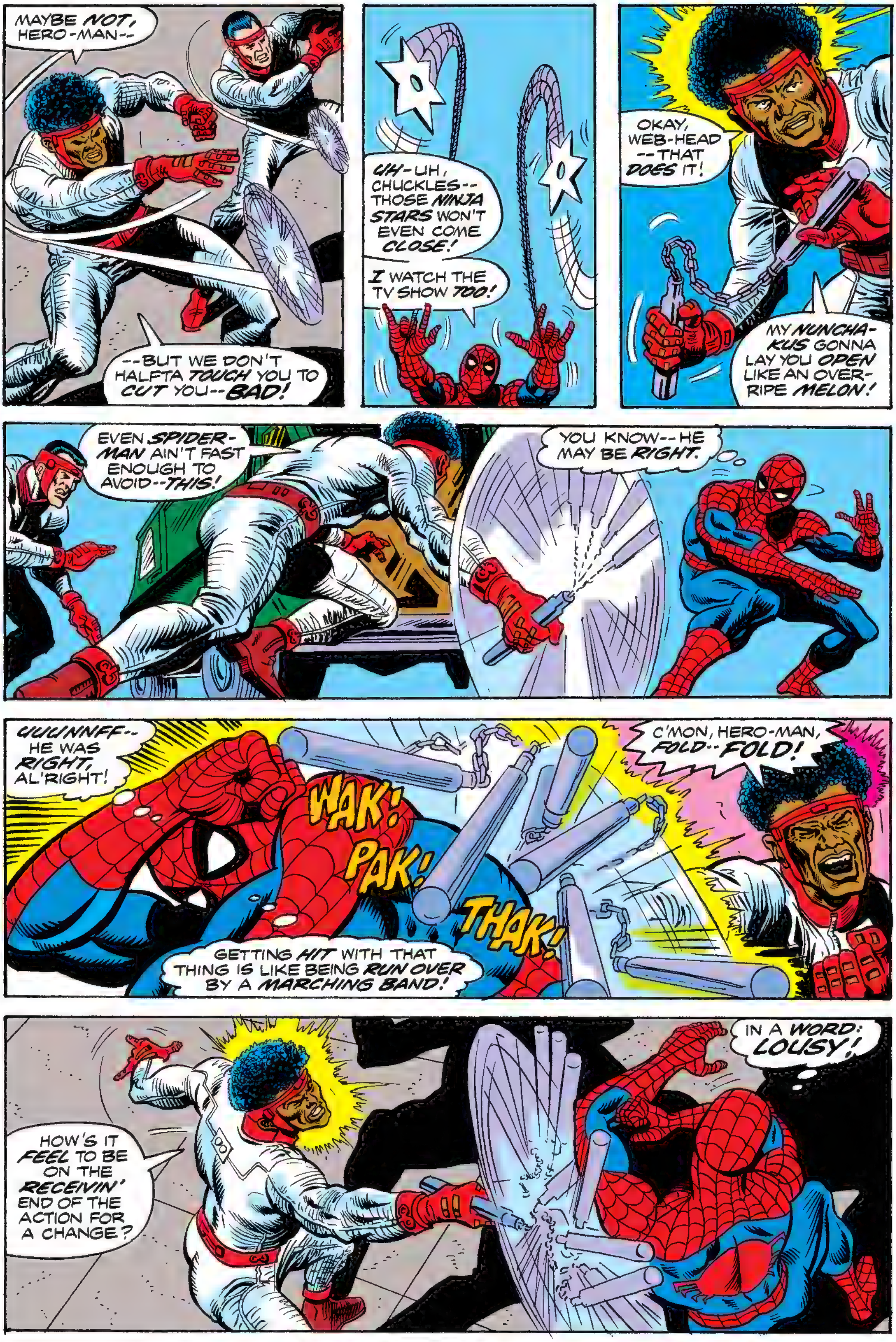
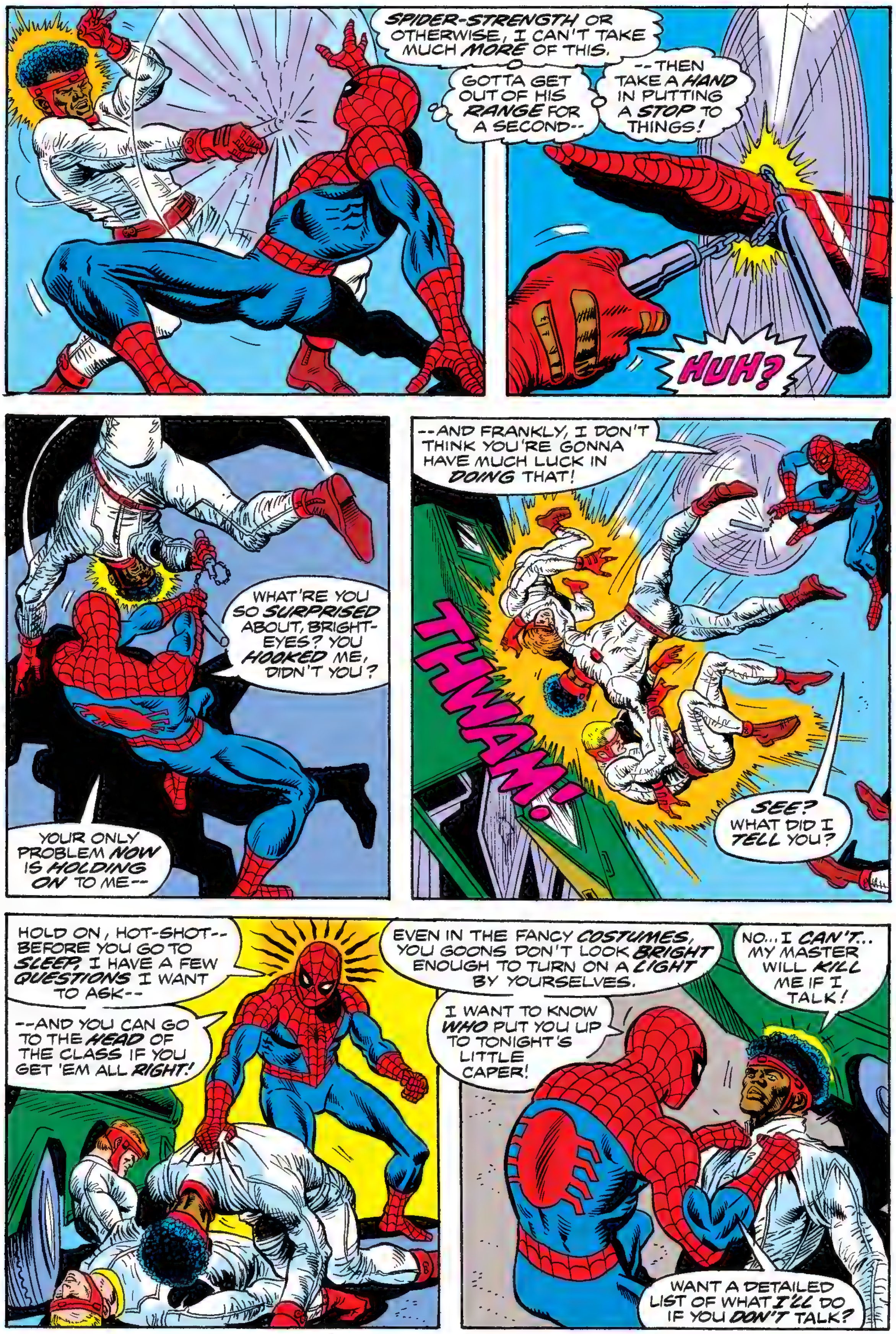
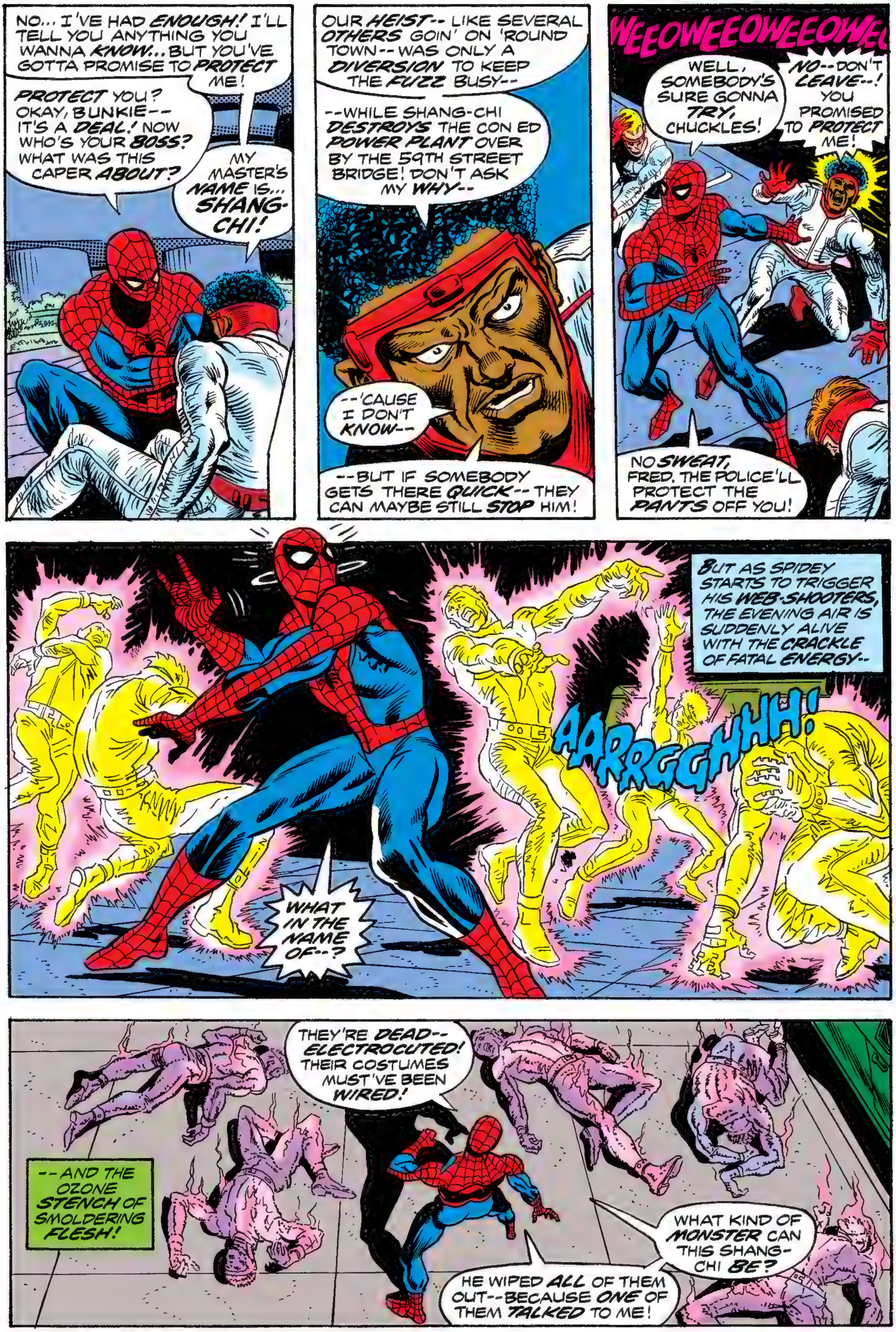
FEATURING CHARACTERS CREATED by SAX ROHMER

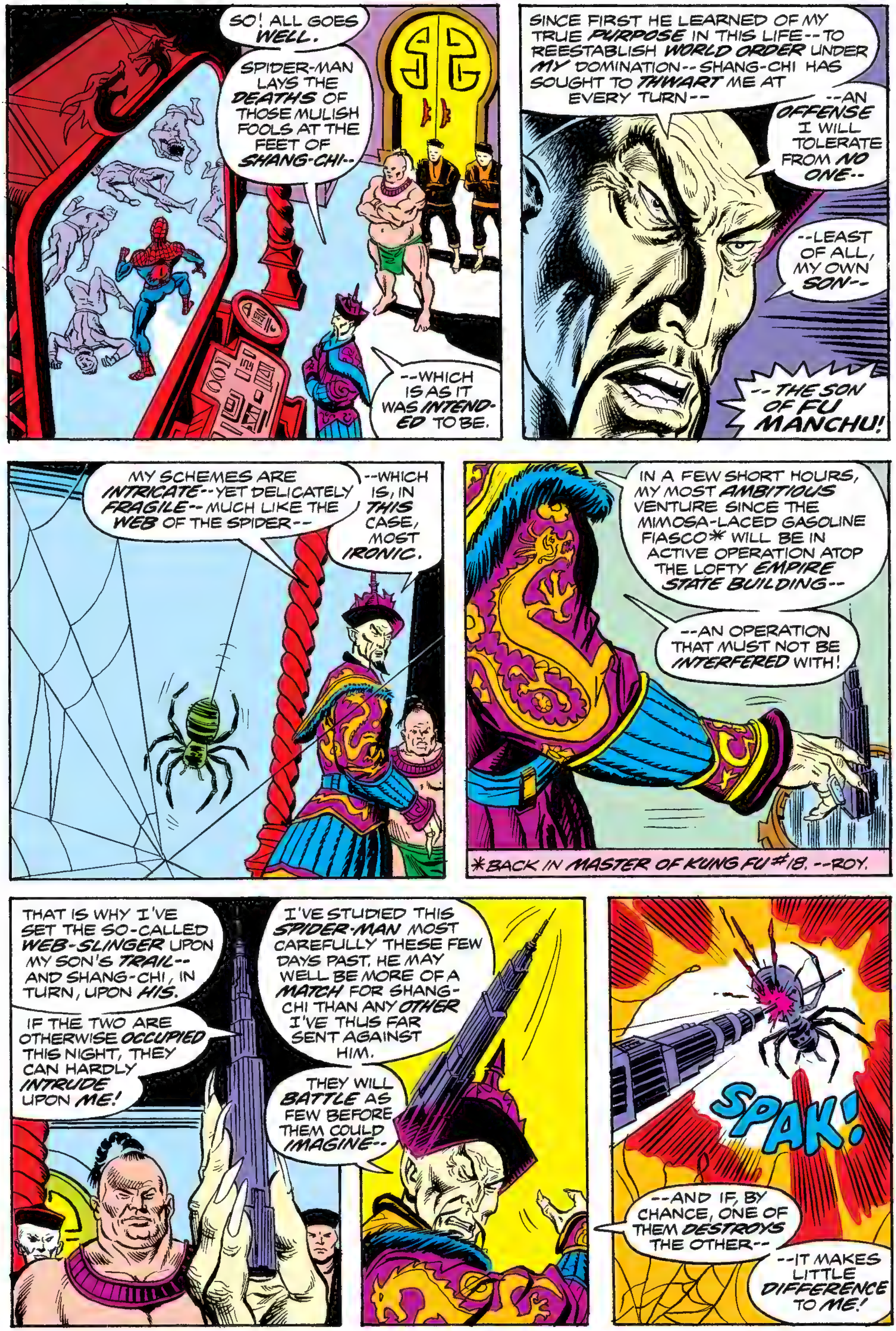

THE GUGGENHEIM MUSEUM ON MANHATTAN'S UPPER EAST SIDE, ARCHITECT FRANK LLOYD WRIGHT'S CROWNING ACHIEVEMENT, IS BEING VIOLATED THIS FINE SUMMER'S NIGHT BY A HANDFUL OF STRANGELY-GARBED MEN--
--WHEN WHO SHOULD COME SWINGING TO THE RESCUE BUT THE BIG APPLE'S CLOSEST ANSWER TO THAT FABLED KNIGHT IN SHINING ARMOR--OR WEBBING, AS THE CASE MAY BE.
TO PUT IT SUCCINCTLY, FAITHFUL ONE... ENTER: SPIDER-MAN!
FELLAS, UNLESS THE GUGGENHEIM HAS STARTED GIVING AWAY FREE SAMPLES-- YOU ARE IN BIIIIIG TROUBLE!
WHO IN--?
SOLOMON R GUGGENHEIM MUSEUM
IT'S SPIDER-MAN! BETTER SCRAG HIM QUICK--BEFORE HE CAN CALL FOR HELP!

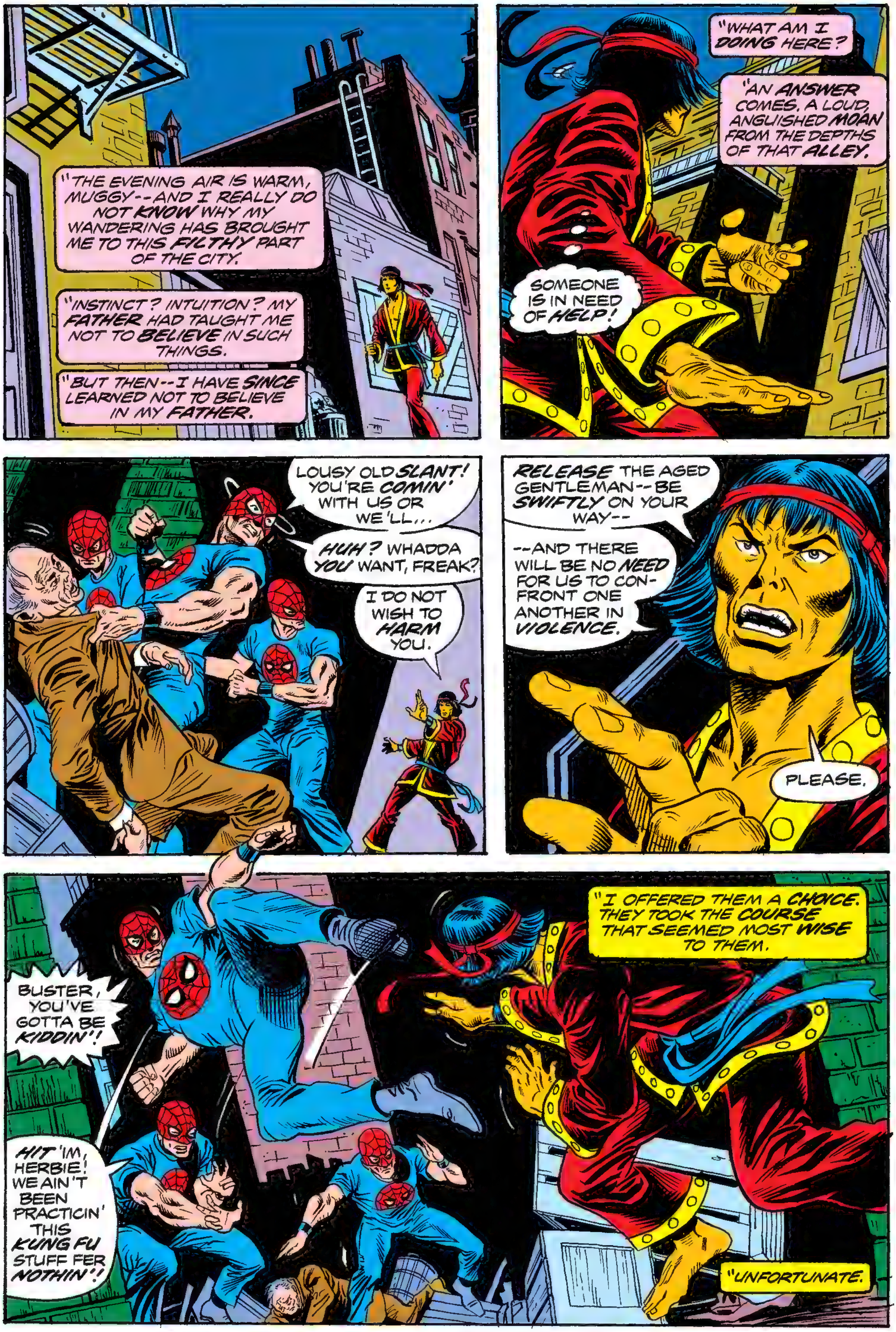

NOW *THAT* IS WHAT I CALL AN *INSULT,* CHARLIE!
SINCE WHEN HAS YOUR FRIENDLY NEIGHBORHOOD WEB-SLINGER NEEDED *HELP* TAKING OUT THE *GARBAGE?*
PLOWW!
UUNNFF!
GARBAGE, EH? WELL, YOU AIN'T TAKIN' *ME* OUT, WALL-CRAWLER--
--NOT A DUDE WITH *MY* MOVES!
HEY, THAT'S A *NEW* ONE! WHAT AM I SUPPOSED TO *DO?*
FAINT FROM THE SMELL OF YOUR *FEET?*
OH--*NOW* I GET IT. YOU'RE A MASTER OF *KUNG FU,* RIGHT?
WUNT!
WRONG!
MISTER, EVERY MUSCLE FREAK IN THIS COCKAMAMIE *TOWN* THINKS HE'S THE NEW *BRUCE LEE,* REST HIS SOUL!
AND THOUGH I HATE TO *DISAPPOINT* YOU, MEATBALL--A SHAOLIN *SAVANT* YOU ARE *NOT!*
THUD!

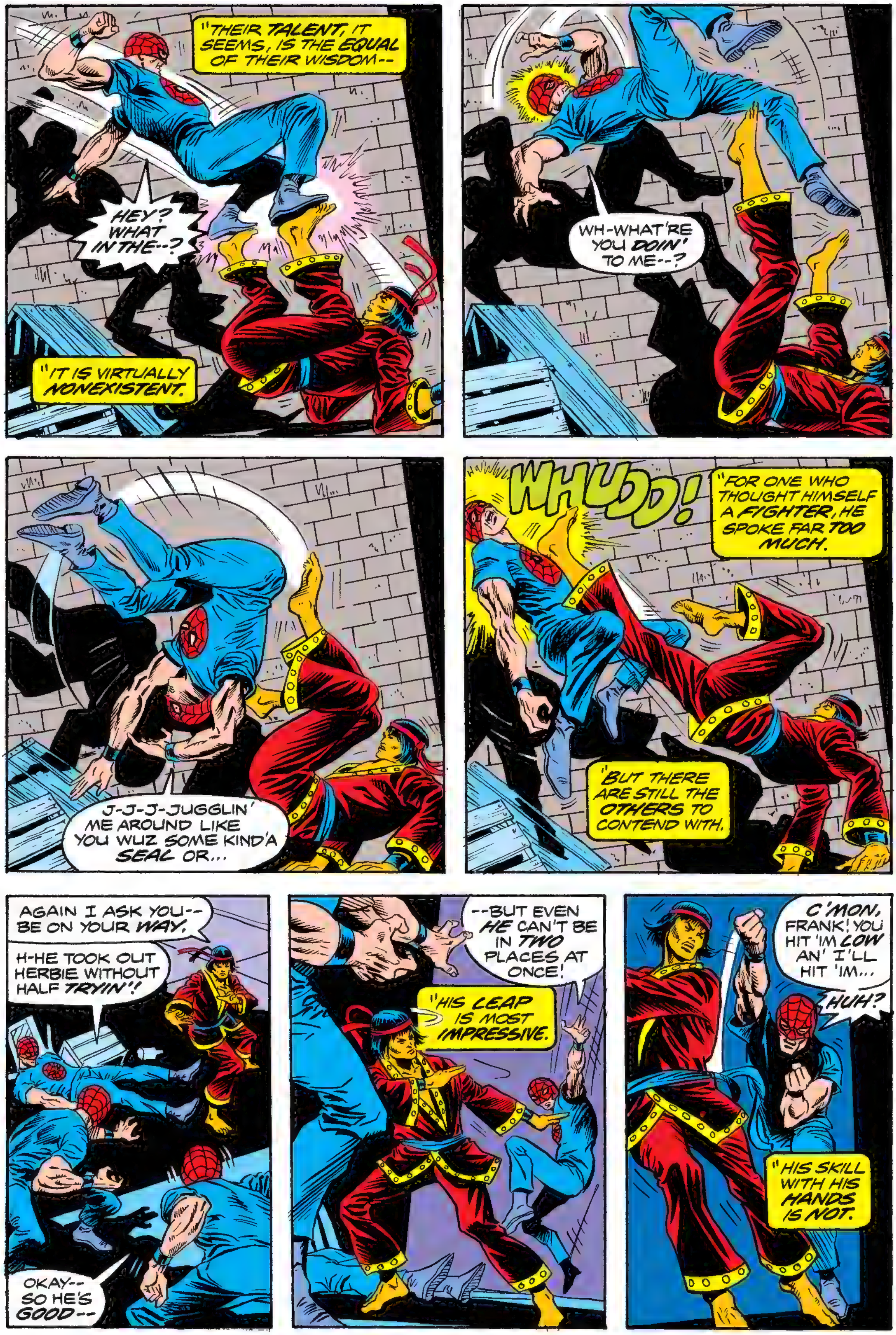

MAYBE NOT, HERO-MAN--
--BUT WE DON'T HALFTA TOUCH YOU TO CUT YOU--BAD!
UH-UH, CHUCKLES--THOSE NINJA STARS WON'T EVEN COME CLOSE!
I WATCH THE TV SHOW TOO!
OKAY, WEB-HEAD --THAT DOES IT!
MY NUNCHAKUS GONNA LAY YOU OPEN LIKE AN OVER-RIPE MELON!
EVEN SPIDER-MAN AIN'T FAST ENOUGH TO AVOID--THIS!
YOU KNOW--HE MAY BE RIGHT.
UUUNNFF--HE WAS RIGHT, AL'RIGHT!
WAK!
PAK!
THAK!
C'MON, HERO-MAN, FOLD--FOLD!
GETTING HIT WITH THAT THING IS LIKE BEING RUN OVER BY A MARCHING BAND!
HOW'S IT FEEL TO BE ON THE RECEIVIN' END OF THE ACTION FOR A CHANGE?
IN A WORD: LOUSY!

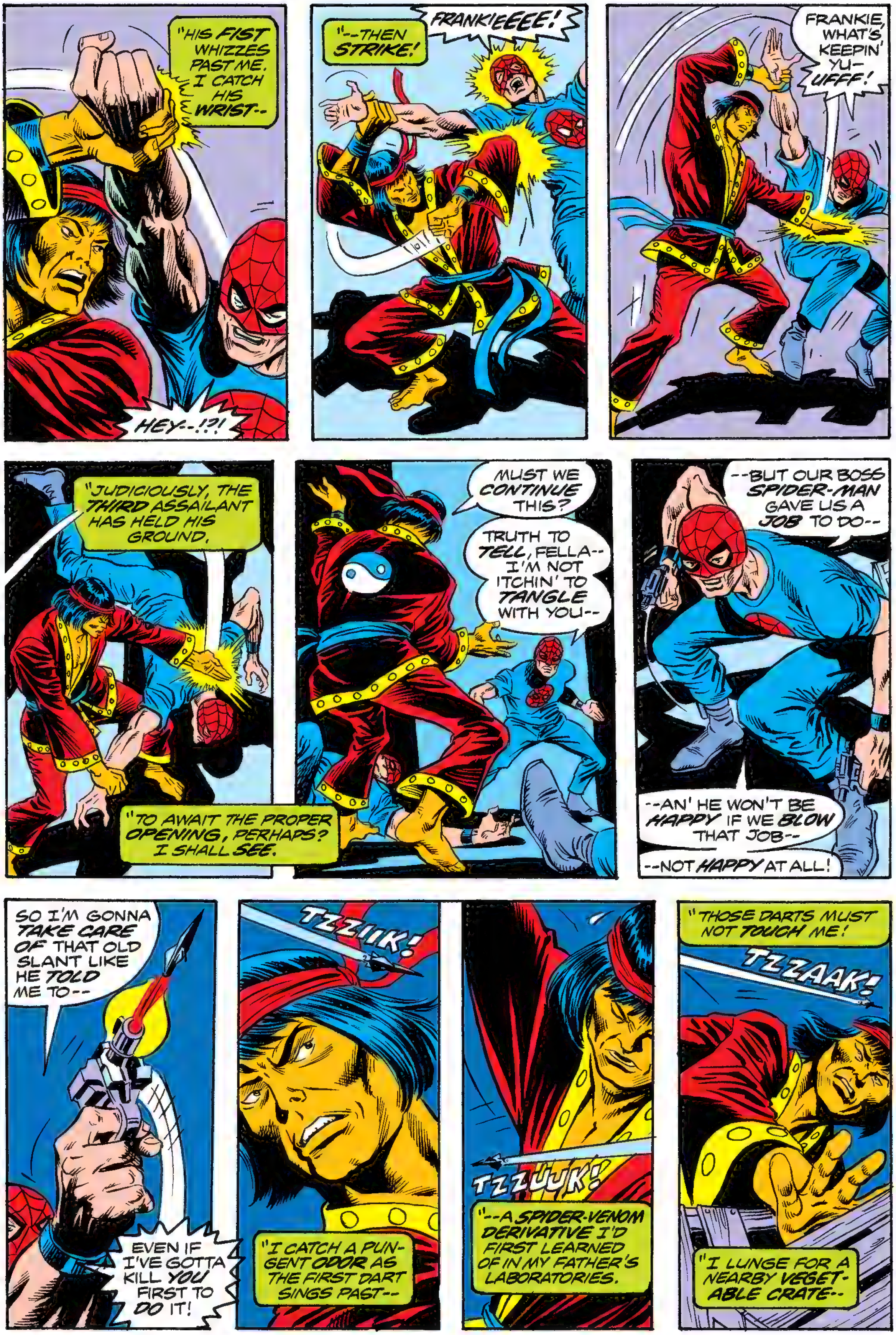

SPIDER-STRENGTH OR OTHERWISE, I CAN'T TAKE MUCH MORE OF THIS.
GOTTA GET OUT OF HIS RANGE FOR A SECOND--
--THEN TAKE A HAND IN PUTTING A STOP TO THINGS!
HUH?
WHAT'RE YOU SO SURPRISED ABOUT, BRIGHT-EYES? YOU HOOKED ME, DIDN'T YOU?
YOUR ONLY PROBLEM NOW IS HOLDING ON TO ME--
--AND FRANKLY, I DON'T THINK YOU'RE GONNA HAVE MUCH LUCK IN DOING THAT!
THWAM!
SEE? WHAT DID I TELL YOU?
HOLD ON, HOT-SHOT--BEFORE YOU GO TO SLEEP, I HAVE A FEW QUESTIONS I WANT TO ASK--
--AND YOU CAN GO TO THE HEAD OF THE CLASS IF YOU GET 'EM ALL RIGHT!
EVEN IN THE FANCY COSTUMES, YOU GOONS DON'T LOOK BRIGHT ENOUGH TO TURN ON A LIGHT BY YOURSELVES.
I WANT TO KNOW WHO PUT YOU UP TO TONIGHT'S LITTLE CAPER!
NO... I CAN'T... MY MASTER WILL KILL ME IF I TALK!
WANT A DETAILED LIST OF WHAT I'LL DO IF YOU DON'T TALK?

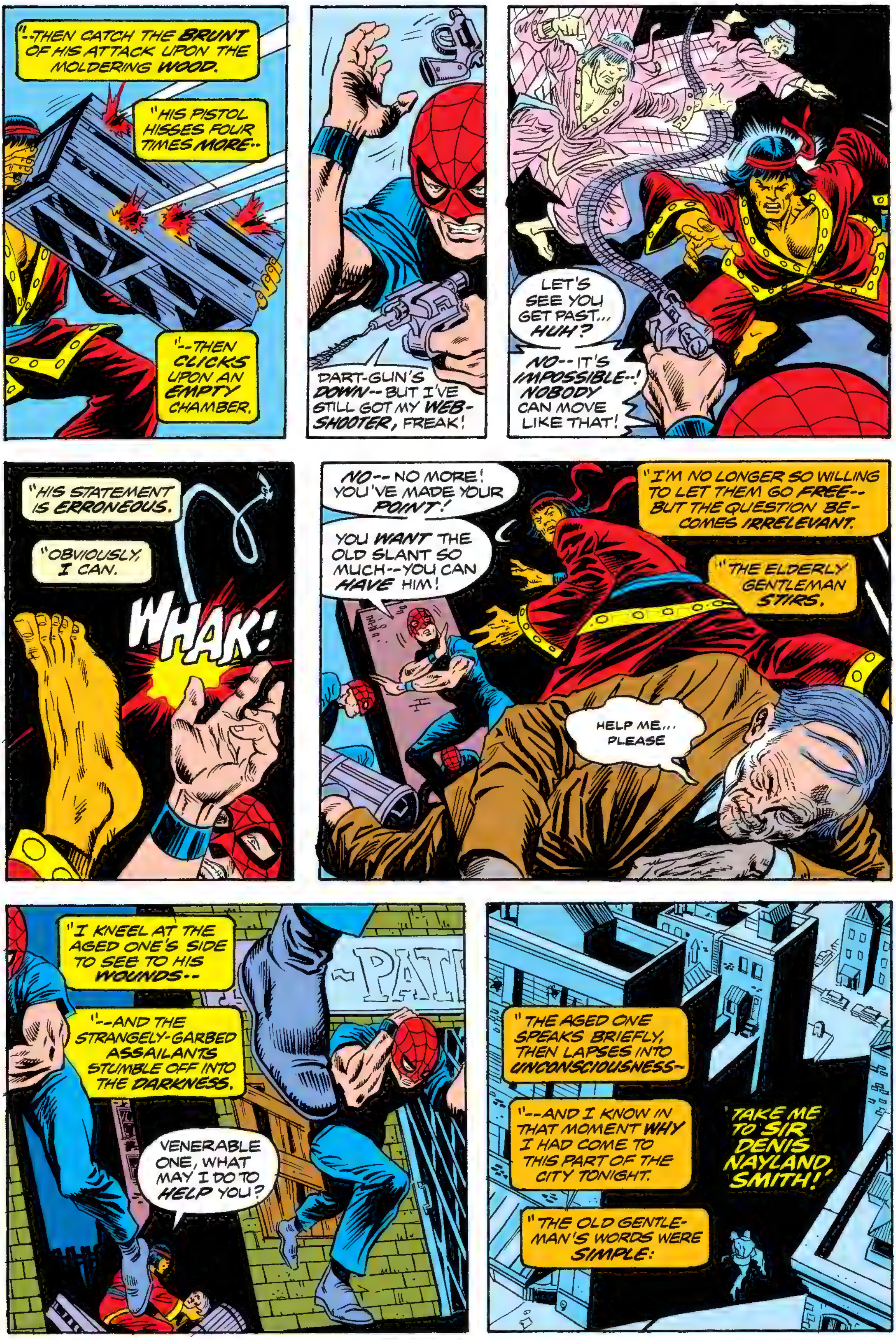

NO... I'VE HAD *ENOUGH!* I'LL TELL YOU ANYTHING YOU WANNA *KNOW*... BUT YOU'VE GOTTA PROMISE TO *PROTECT* ME!
PROTECT YOU? OKAY, BUNKIE-- IT'S A *DEAL!* NOW WHO'S YOUR *BOSS?* WHAT WAS THIS CAPER *ABOUT?*
MY MASTER'S *NAME* IS... *SHANG-CHI!*
OUR *HEIST*-- LIKE SEVERAL *OTHERS* GOIN' ON 'ROUND TOWN-- WAS ONLY A *DIVERSION* TO KEEP THE *FUZZ* BUSY--
--WHILE SHANG-CHI *DESTROYS* THE CON ED *POWER PLANT* OVER BY THE 59TH STREET BRIDGE! DON'T ASK MY *WHY*--
--'CAUSE I DON'T *KNOW*--
--BUT IF SOMEBODY GETS THERE *QUICK*-- THEY CAN MAYBE STILL *STOP* HIM!
WEEOWEEOWEEOWEE
WELL, SOMEBODY'S SURE GONNA *TRY*, CHUCKLES!
NO-- DON'T *LEAVE*--! YOU PROMISED TO *PROTECT* ME!
NO *SWEAT*, FRED. THE POLICE'LL PROTECT THE *PANTS* OFF YOU!
BUT AS SPIDEY STARTS TO TRIGGER HIS WEB-SHOOTERS, THE EVENING AIR IS SUDDENLY ALIVE WITH THE CRACKLE OF FATAL ENERGY--
AARRGGHHH!
WHAT IN THE NAME OF--?
THEY'RE *DEAD*-- *ELECTROCUTED!* THEIR COSTUMES MUST'VE BEEN *WIRED!*
--AND THE OZONE *STENCH* OF SMOLDERING *FLESH!*
WHAT KIND OF *MONSTER* CAN THIS SHANG-CHI *BE?*
HE WIPED *ALL* OF THEM OUT--BECAUSE *ONE* OF THEM *TALKED* TO ME!

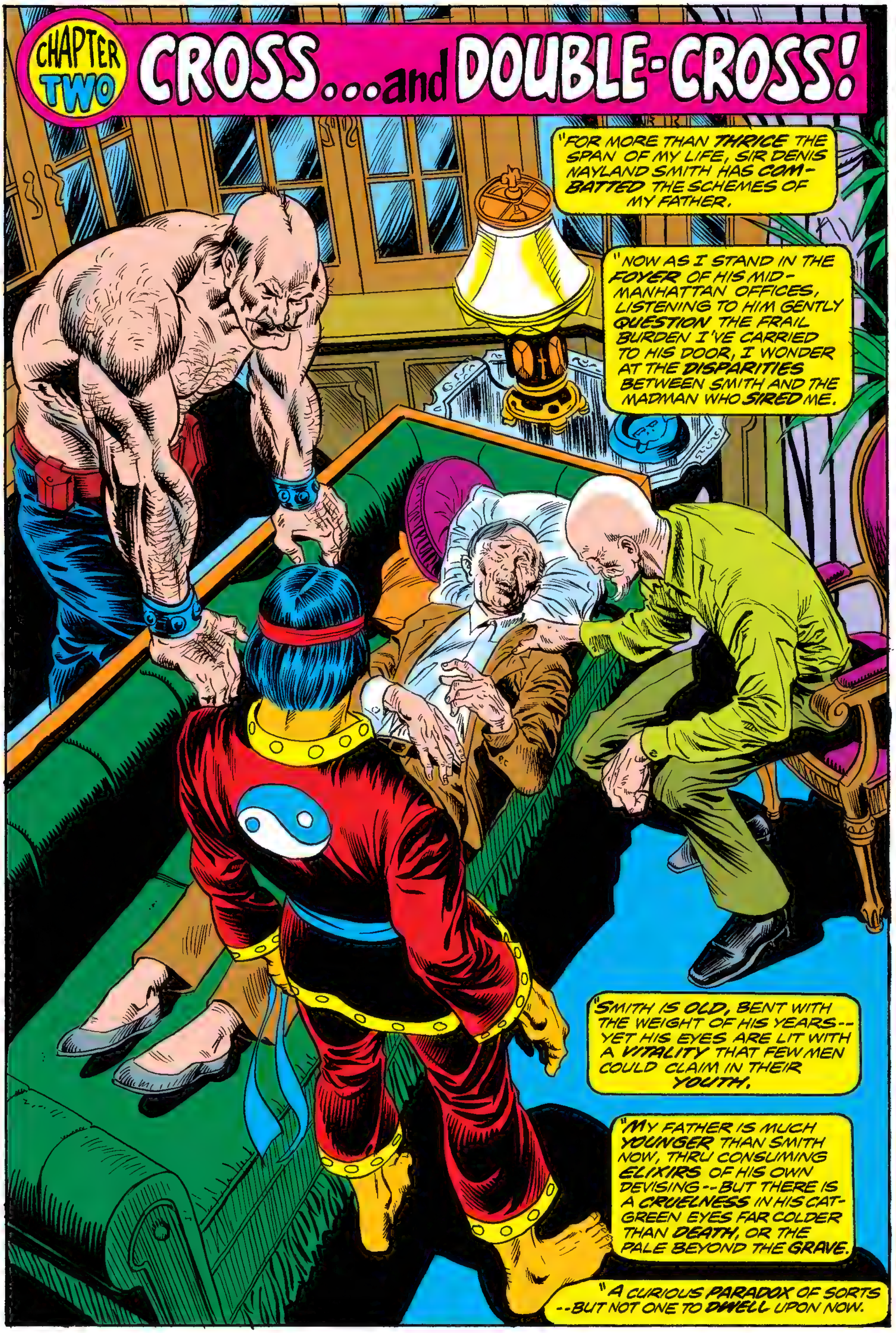

SO! ALL GOES *WELL.*
SPIDER-MAN LAYS THE *DEATHS* OF THOSE MULISH FOOLS AT THE FEET OF *SHANG-CHI*--
--WHICH IS AS IT WAS *INTENDED* TO BE.
SINCE FIRST HE LEARNED OF MY TRUE *PURPOSE* IN THIS LIFE--TO REESTABLISH *WORLD ORDER* UNDER *MY* DOMINATION--SHANG-CHI HAS SOUGHT TO *THWART* ME AT EVERY TURN--
--AN *OFFENSE* I WILL TOLERATE FROM *NO ONE*--
--LEAST OF ALL, MY OWN *SON*--
--*THE SON OF FU MANCHU!*
MY SCHEMES ARE *INTRICATE*--YET DELICATELY *FRAGILE*--MUCH LIKE THE *WEB* OF THE SPIDER--
--WHICH IS, IN *THIS* CASE, MOST *IRONIC.*
IN A FEW SHORT HOURS, MY MOST *AMBITIOUS* VENTURE SINCE THE MIMOSA-LACED GASOLINE FIASCO* WILL BE IN ACTIVE OPERATION ATOP THE LOFTY *EMPIRE STATE BUILDING*--
--AN OPERATION THAT MUST NOT BE *INTERFERED* WITH!
*BACK IN *MASTER OF KUNG FU* #18. --ROY.
THAT IS WHY I'VE SET THE SO-CALLED *WEB-SLINGER* UPON MY SON'S *TRAIL*--AND SHANG-CHI, IN TURN, UPON *HIS.*
IF THE TWO ARE OTHERWISE *OCCUPIED* THIS NIGHT, THEY CAN HARDLY *INTRUDE* UPON *ME!*
I'VE STUDIED THIS *SPIDER-MAN* MOST CAREFULLY THESE FEW DAYS PAST. HE MAY WELL BE MORE OF A *MATCH* FOR SHANG-CHI THAN ANY *OTHER* I'VE THUS FAR SENT AGAINST HIM.
THEY WILL *BATTLE* AS FEW BEFORE THEM COULD *IMAGINE*--
SPAK!
--AND IF, BY CHANCE, ONE OF THEM *DESTROYS* THE OTHER--
--IT MAKES LITTLE *DIFFERENCE* TO *ME!*

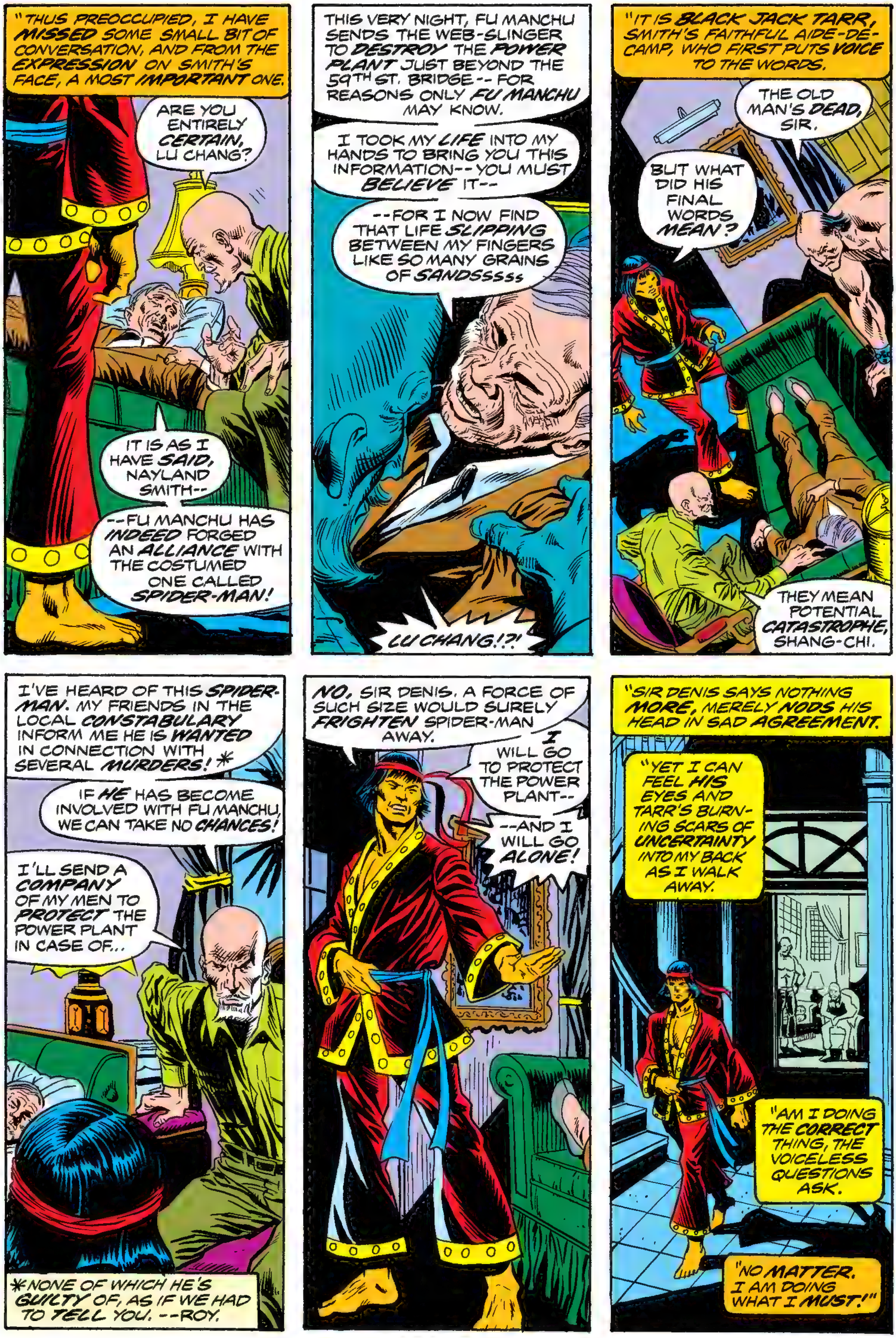

"THE EVENING AIR IS WARM, MUGGY--AND I REALLY DO NOT *KNOW* WHY MY WANDERING HAS BROUGHT ME TO THIS *FILTHY* PART OF THE CITY.
"INSTINCT? INTUITION? MY *FATHER* HAD TAUGHT ME NOT TO *BELIEVE* IN SUCH THINGS.
"BUT THEN--I HAVE *SINCE* LEARNED NOT TO BELIEVE IN MY *FATHER*.
"WHAT AM I *DOING* HERE?
"AN *ANSWER* COMES. A LOUD, ANGUISHED *MOAN* FROM THE DEPTHS OF THAT *ALLEY*.
SOMEONE IS IN NEED OF *HELP*!
LOUSY OLD *SLANT*! YOU'RE *COMIN'* WITH US OR WE'LL...
HUH? WHADDA *YOU* WANT, FREAK?
I DO NOT WISH TO *HARM* YOU.
RELEASE THE AGED GENTLEMAN--BE *SWIFTLY* ON YOUR WAY--
--AND THERE WILL BE NO *NEED* FOR US TO CONFRONT ONE ANOTHER IN *VIOLENCE*.
PLEASE.
"I OFFERED THEM A *CHOICE*. THEY TOOK THE *COURSE* THAT SEEMED MOST *WISE* TO THEM.
BUSTER, YOU'VE GOTTA BE *KIDDIN'*!
HIT 'IM, HERBIE! WE AIN'T BEEN PRACTICIN' THIS *KUNG FU* STUFF FER *NOTHIN'*!
"UNFORTUNATE.

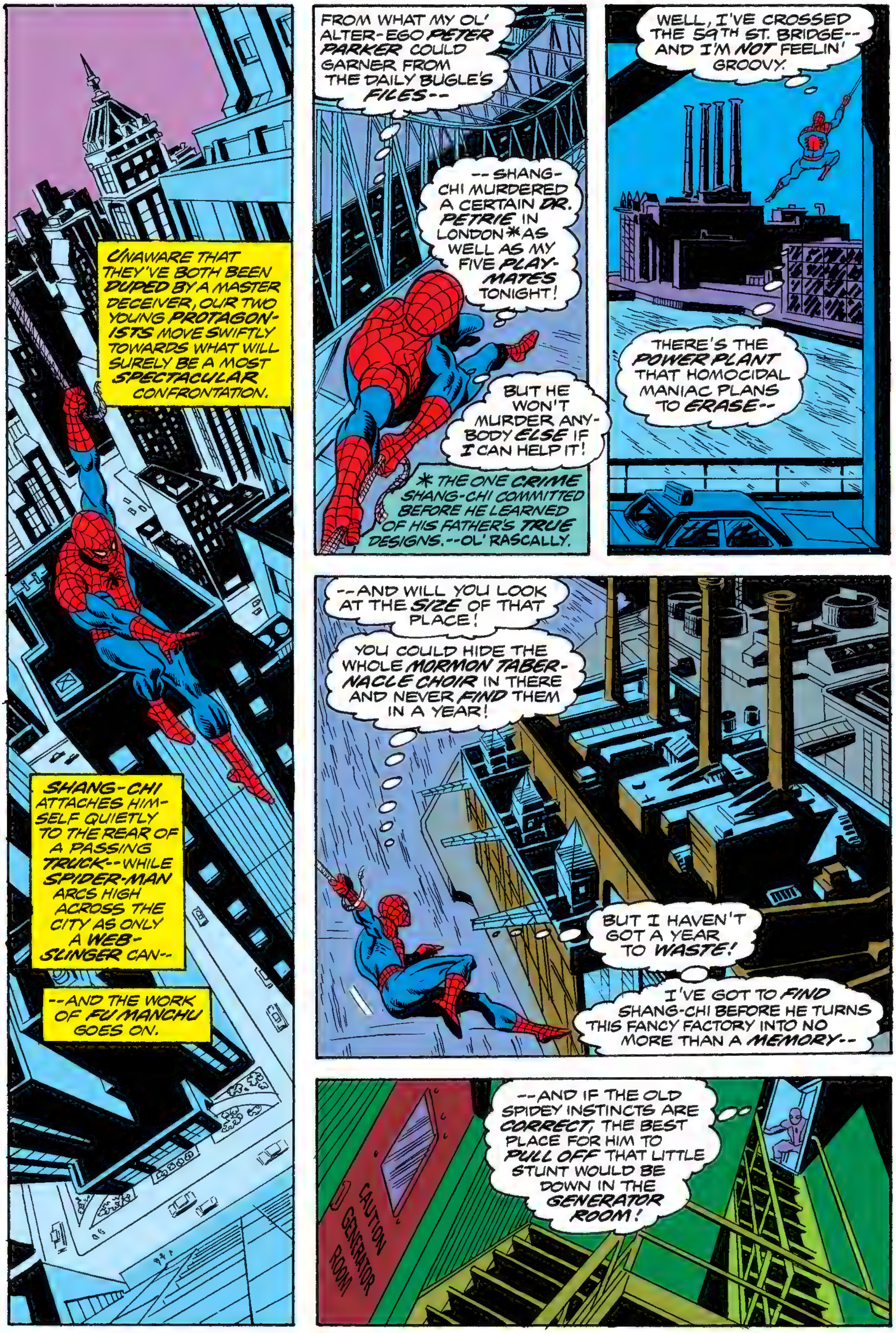

"THEIR TALENT, IT SEEMS, IS THE EQUAL OF THEIR WISDOM--
HEY? WHAT IN THE--?
"IT IS VIRTUALLY NONEXISTENT.
WH-WHAT'RE YOU DOIN' TO ME--?
J-J-J-JUGGLIN' ME AROUND LIKE YOU WUZ SOME KIND'A SEAL OR...
WHUDD!
"FOR ONE WHO THOUGHT HIMSELF A FIGHTER, HE SPOKE FAR TOO MUCH.
"BUT THERE ARE STILL THE OTHERS TO CONTEND WITH.
AGAIN I ASK YOU-- BE ON YOUR WAY.
H-HE TOOK OUT HERBIE WITHOUT HALF TRYIN'!
OKAY-- SO HE'S GOOD--
--BUT EVEN HE CAN'T BE IN TWO PLACES AT ONCE!
"HIS LEAP IS MOST IMPRESSIVE.
C'MON, FRANK! YOU HIT 'IM LOW AN' I'LL HIT 'IM...
HUH?
"HIS SKILL WITH HIS HANDS IS NOT.

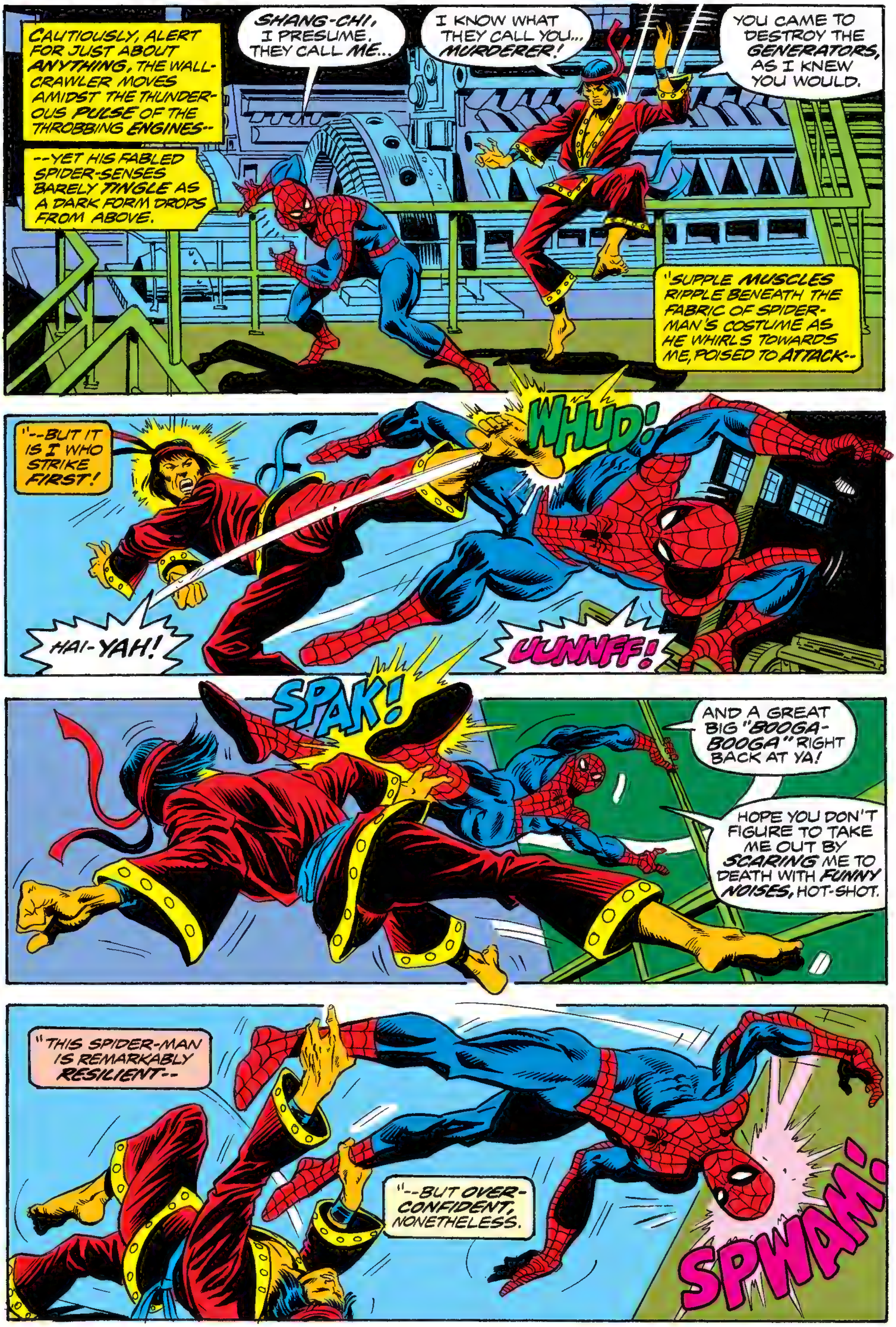

"HIS FIST WHIZZES PAST ME. I CATCH HIS WRIST--
HEY--!?!
"--THEN STRIKE!
FRANKIEEEE!
FRANKIE, WHAT'S KEEPIN' YU--UFFF!
"JUDICIOUSLY, THE THIRD ASSAILANT HAS HELD HIS GROUND.
"TO AWAIT THE PROPER OPENING, PERHAPS? I SHALL SEE.
MUST WE CONTINUE THIS?
TRUTH TO TELL, FELLA-- I'M NOT ITCHIN' TO TANGLE WITH YOU--
--BUT OUR BOSS SPIDER-MAN GAVE US A JOB TO DO--
--AN' HE WON'T BE HAPPY IF WE BLOW THAT JOB--
--NOT HAPPY AT ALL!
SO I'M GONNA TAKE CARE OF THAT OLD SLANT LIKE HE TOLD ME TO--
EVEN IF I'VE GOTTA KILL YOU FIRST TO DO IT!
TZZIIK!
"I CATCH A PUNGENT ODOR AS THE FIRST DART SINGS PAST--
TZZUUK!
"--A SPIDER-VENOM DERIVATIVE I'D FIRST LEARNED OF IN MY FATHER'S LABORATORIES.
"THOSE DARTS MUST NOT TOUCH ME!
TZZZAAK!
"I LUNGE FOR A NEARBY VEGETABLE CRATE--

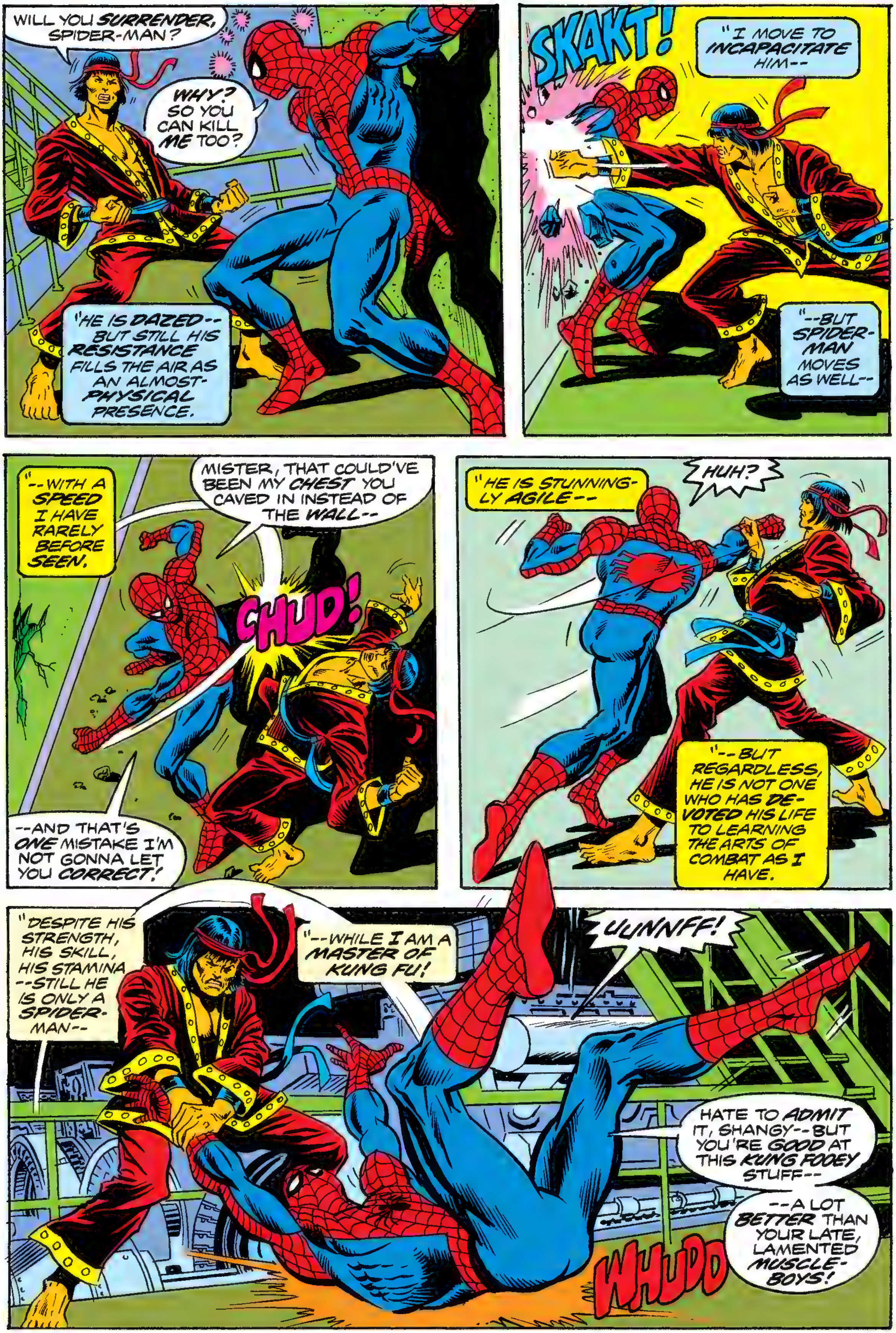

"-THEN CATCH THE BRUNT OF HIS ATTACK UPON THE MOLDERING WOOD.
"HIS PISTOL HISSES FOUR TIMES MORE--
"--THEN CLICKS UPON AN EMPTY CHAMBER.
DART-GUN'S DOWN--BUT I'VE STILL GOT MY WEB-SHOOTER, FREAK!
LET'S SEE YOU GET PAST... HUH?
NO--IT'S IMPOSSIBLE--! NOBODY CAN MOVE LIKE THAT!
"HIS STATEMENT IS ERRONEOUS.
"OBVIOUSLY, I CAN.
WHAK!
NO--NO MORE! YOU'VE MADE YOUR POINT!
YOU WANT THE OLD SLANT SO MUCH--YOU CAN HAVE HIM!
"I'M NO LONGER SO WILLING TO LET THEM GO FREE--BUT THE QUESTION BECOMES IRRELEVANT.
"THE ELDERLY GENTLEMAN STIRS.
HELP ME... PLEASE
"I KNEEL AT THE AGED ONE'S SIDE TO SEE TO HIS WOUNDS--
"--AND THE STRANGELY-GARBED ASSAILANTS STUMBLE OFF INTO THE DARKNESS.
PAT
VENERABLE ONE, WHAT MAY I DO TO HELP YOU?
"THE AGED ONE SPEAKS BRIEFLY, THEN LAPSES INTO UNCONSCIOUSNESS--
"--AND I KNOW IN THAT MOMENT WHY I HAD COME TO THIS PART OF THE CITY TONIGHT.
"THE OLD GENTLEMAN'S WORDS WERE SIMPLE:
'TAKE ME TO SIR DENIS NAYLAND SMITH!'

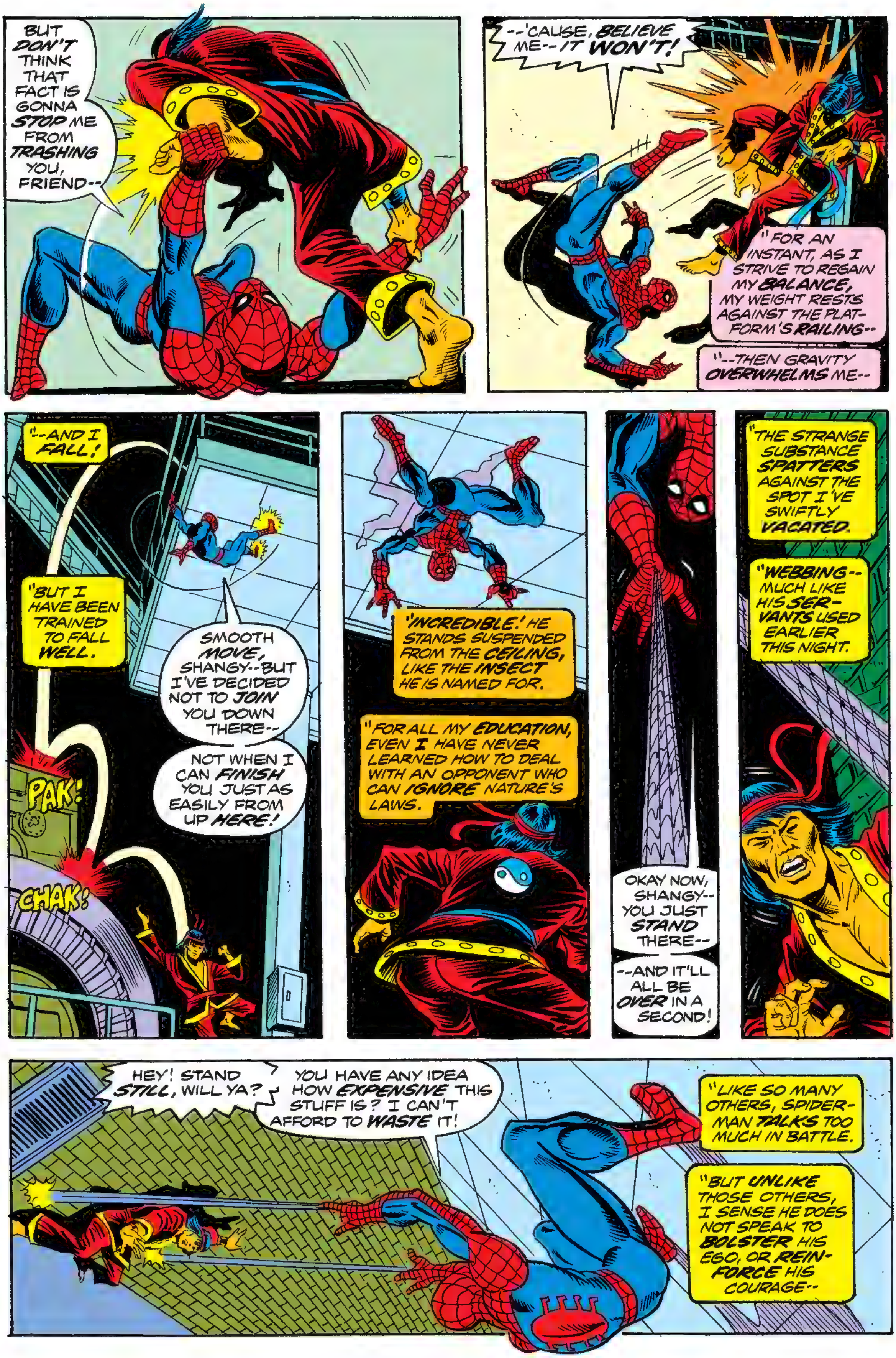

CHAPTER TWO
CROSS...and DOUBLE-CROSS!
"FOR MORE THAN THRICE THE SPAN OF MY LIFE, SIR DENIS NAYLAND SMITH HAS COMBATTED THE SCHEMES OF MY FATHER.
"NOW AS I STAND IN THE FOYER OF HIS MID-MANHATTAN OFFICES, LISTENING TO HIM GENTLY QUESTION THE FRAIL BURDEN I'VE CARRIED TO HIS DOOR, I WONDER AT THE DISPARITIES BETWEEN SMITH AND THE MADMAN WHO SIRED ME.
"SMITH IS OLD, BENT WITH THE WEIGHT OF HIS YEARS--YET HIS EYES ARE LIT WITH A VITALITY THAT FEW MEN COULD CLAIM IN THEIR YOUTH.
"MY FATHER IS MUCH YOUNGER THAN SMITH NOW, THRU CONSUMING ELIXIRS OF HIS OWN DEVISING--BUT THERE IS A CRUELNESS IN HIS CAT-GREEN EYES FAR COLDER THAN DEATH, OR THE PALE BEYOND THE GRAVE.
"A CURIOUS PARADOX OF SORTS--BUT NOT ONE TO DWELL UPON NOW.

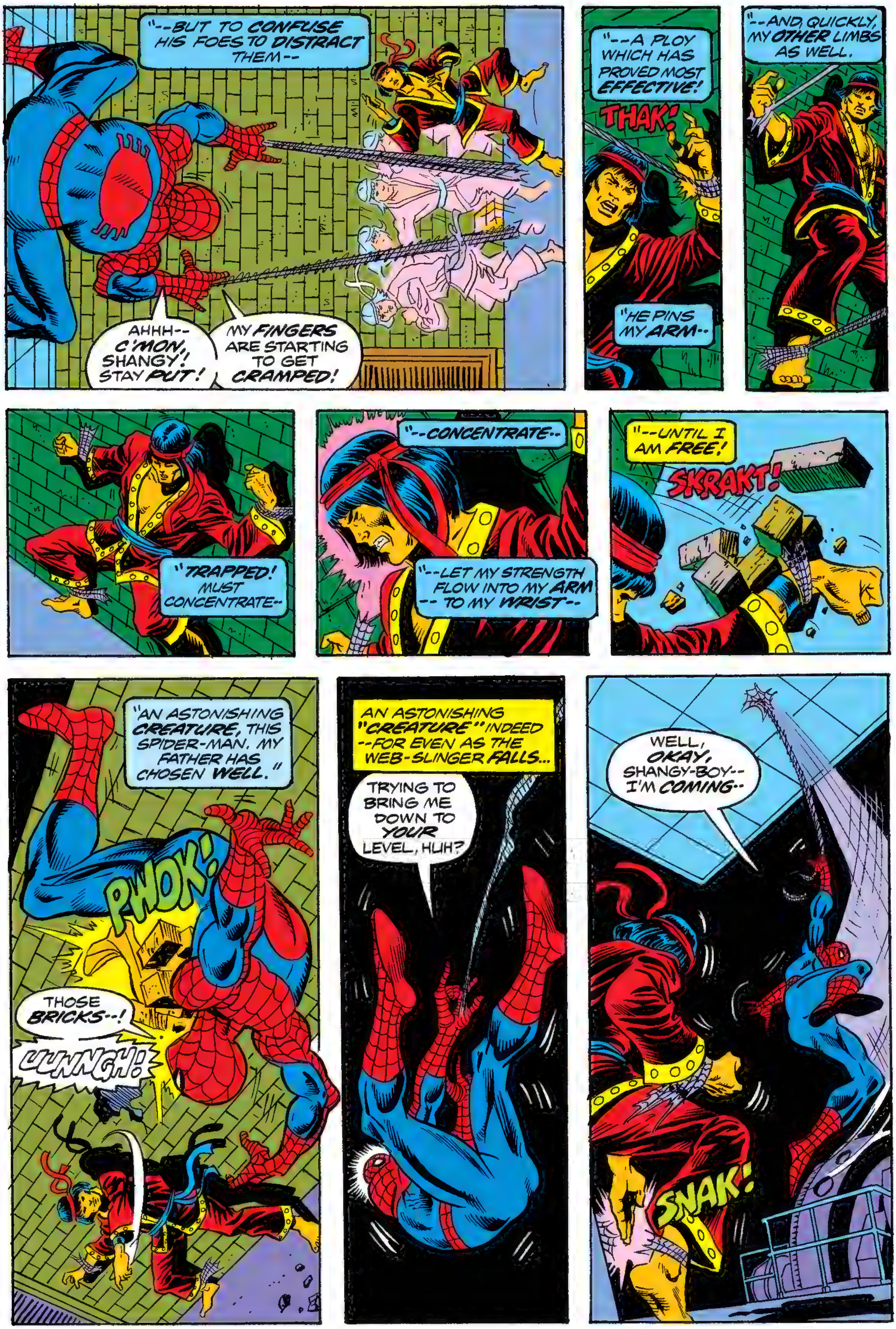

"THUS PREOCCUPIED, I HAVE MISSED SOME SMALL BIT OF CONVERSATION, AND FROM THE EXPRESSION ON SMITH'S FACE, A MOST IMPORTANT ONE.
ARE YOU ENTIRELY CERTAIN, LU CHANG?
IT IS AS I HAVE SAID, NAYLAND SMITH--
--FU MANCHU HAS INDEED FORGED AN ALLIANCE WITH THE COSTUMED ONE CALLED SPIDER-MAN!
THIS VERY NIGHT, FU MANCHU SENDS THE WEB-SLINGER TO DESTROY THE POWER PLANT JUST BEYOND THE 59TH ST. BRIDGE-- FOR REASONS ONLY FU MANCHU MAY KNOW.
I TOOK MY LIFE INTO MY HANDS TO BRING YOU THIS INFORMATION--YOU MUST BELIEVE IT--
--FOR I NOW FIND THAT LIFE SLIPPING BETWEEN MY FINGERS LIKE SO MANY GRAINS OF SANDSSSSS
LU CHANG!?!
"IT IS BLACK JACK TARR, SMITH'S FAITHFUL AIDE-DE-CAMP, WHO FIRST PUTS VOICE TO THE WORDS.
THE OLD MAN'S DEAD, SIR.
BUT WHAT DID HIS FINAL WORDS MEAN?
THEY MEAN POTENTIAL CATASTROPHE, SHANG-CHI.
I'VE HEARD OF THIS SPIDER-MAN. MY FRIENDS IN THE LOCAL CONSTABULARY INFORM ME HE IS WANTED IN CONNECTION WITH SEVERAL MURDERS!*
IF HE HAS BECOME INVOLVED WITH FU MANCHU, WE CAN TAKE NO CHANCES!
I'LL SEND A COMPANY OF MY MEN TO PROTECT THE POWER PLANT IN CASE OF...
*NONE OF WHICH HE'S GUILTY OF, AS IF WE HAD TO TELL YOU. --ROY.
NO, SIR DENIS. A FORCE OF SUCH SIZE WOULD SURELY FRIGHTEN SPIDER-MAN AWAY.
I WILL GO TO PROTECT THE POWER PLANT--
--AND I WILL GO ALONE!
"SIR DENIS SAYS NOTHING MORE, MERELY NODS HIS HEAD IN SAD AGREEMENT.
"YET I CAN FEEL HIS EYES AND TARR'S BURNING SCARS OF UNCERTAINTY INTO MY BACK AS I WALK AWAY.
"AM I DOING THE CORRECT THING, THE VOICELESS QUESTIONS ASK.
"NO MATTER. I AM DOING WHAT I MUST!"

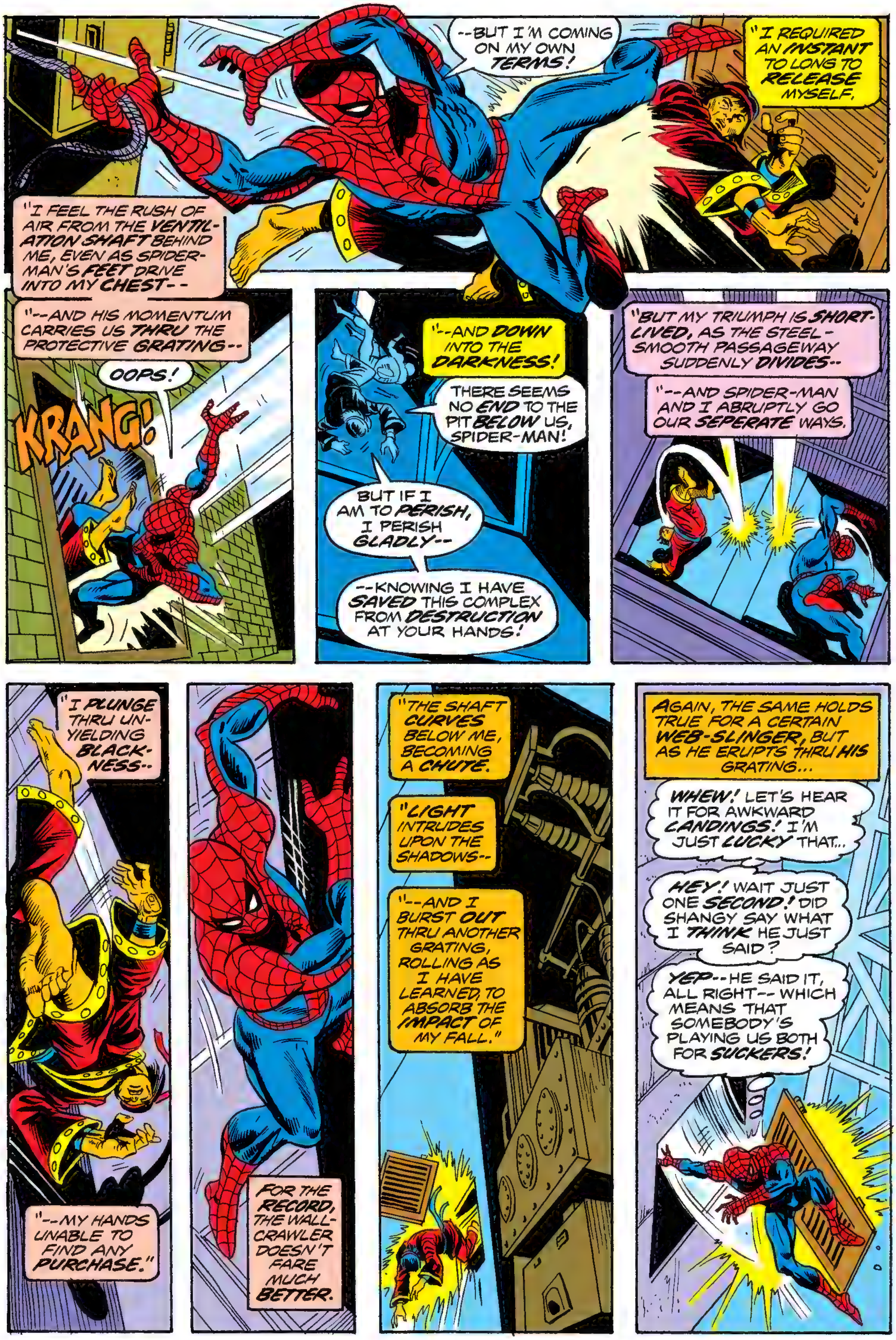

UNAWARE THAT THEY'VE BOTH BEEN DUPED BY A MASTER DECEIVER, OUR TWO YOUNG PROTAGONISTS MOVE SWIFTLY TOWARDS WHAT WILL SURELY BE A MOST SPECTACULAR CONFRONTATION.
SHANG-CHI ATTACHES HIMSELF QUIETLY TO THE REAR OF A PASSING TRUCK--WHILE SPIDER-MAN ARCS HIGH ACROSS THE CITY AS ONLY A WEB-SLINGER CAN--
--AND THE WORK OF FU MANCHU GOES ON.
FROM WHAT MY OL' ALTER-EGO PETER PARKER COULD GARNER FROM THE DAILY BUGLE'S FILES--
--SHANG-CHI MURDERED A CERTAIN DR. PETRIE IN LONDON* AS WELL AS MY FIVE PLAYMATES TONIGHT!
BUT HE WON'T MURDER ANYBODY ELSE IF I CAN HELP IT!
* THE ONE CRIME SHANG-CHI COMMITTED BEFORE HE LEARNED OF HIS FATHER'S TRUE DESIGNS.--OL' RASCALLY.
WELL, I'VE CROSSED THE 59th ST. BRIDGE--AND I'M NOT FEELIN' GROOVY.
THERE'S THE POWER PLANT THAT HOMOCIDAL MANIAC PLANS TO ERASE--
--AND WILL YOU LOOK AT THE SIZE OF THAT PLACE!
YOU COULD HIDE THE WHOLE MORMON TABERNACLE CHOIR IN THERE AND NEVER FIND THEM IN A YEAR!
BUT I HAVEN'T GOT A YEAR TO WASTE!
I'VE GOT TO FIND SHANG-CHI BEFORE HE TURNS THIS FANCY FACTORY INTO NO MORE THAN A MEMORY--
--AND IF THE OLD SPIDEY INSTINCTS ARE CORRECT, THE BEST PLACE FOR HIM TO PULL OFF THAT LITTLE STUNT WOULD BE DOWN IN THE GENERATOR ROOM!
CAUTION GENERATOR ROOM

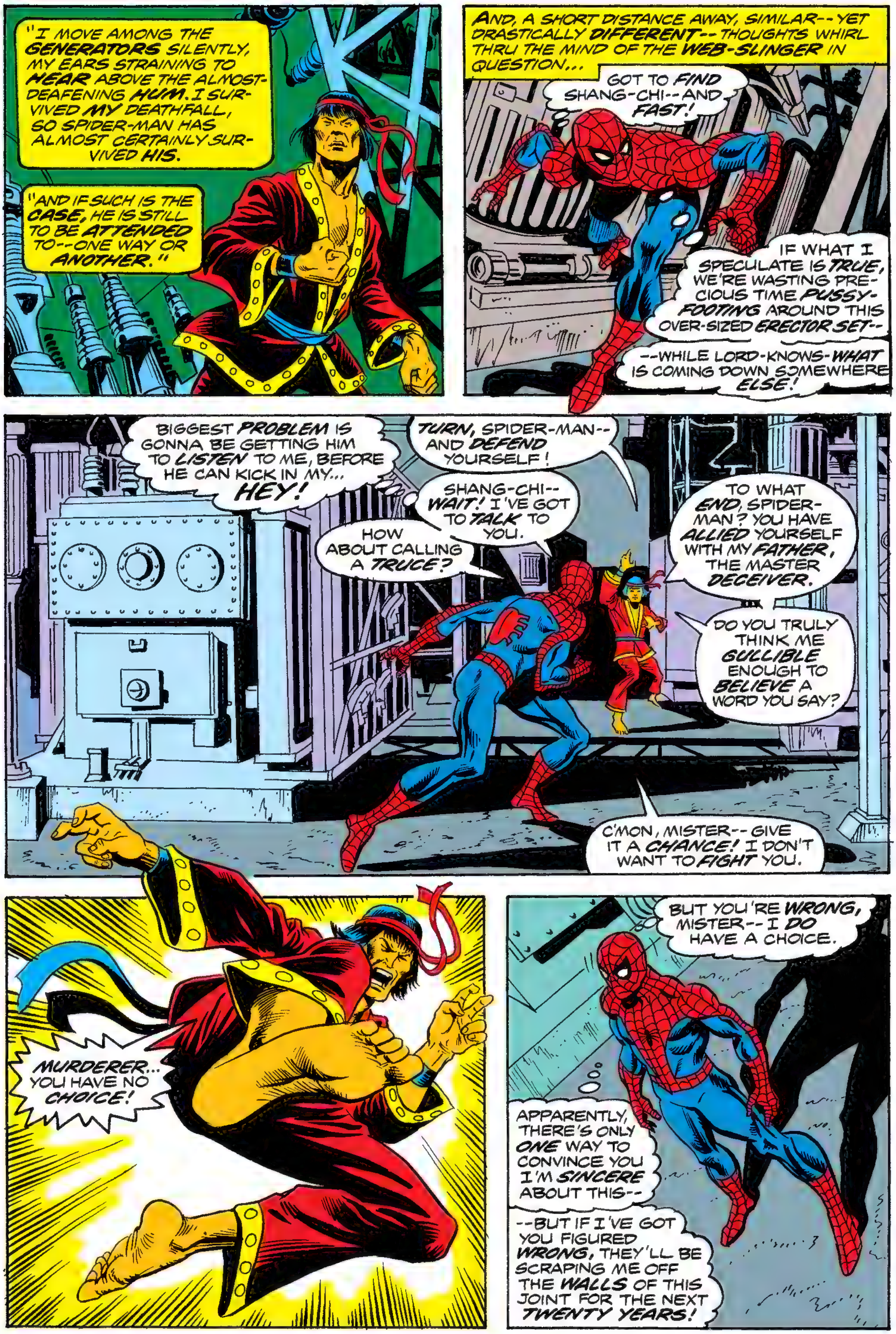

CAUTIOUSLY, ALERT FOR JUST ABOUT ANYTHING, THE WALL-CRAWLER MOVES AMIDST THE THUNDEROUS PULSE OF THE THROBBING ENGINES--
--YET HIS FABLED SPIDER-SENSES BARELY TINGLE AS A DARK FORM DROPS FROM ABOVE.
SHANG-CHI, I PRESUME. THEY CALL ME...
I KNOW WHAT THEY CALL YOU... MURDERER!
YOU CAME TO DESTROY THE GENERATORS, AS I KNEW YOU WOULD.
"SUPPLE MUSCLES RIPPLE BENEATH THE FABRIC OF SPIDER-MAN'S COSTUME AS HE WHIRLS TOWARDS ME, POISED TO ATTACK--
"--BUT IT IS I WHO STRIKE FIRST!
WHUD!
HAI-YAH!
UUNNFF!
SPAK!
AND A GREAT BIG "BOOGA-BOOGA" RIGHT BACK AT YA!
HOPE YOU DON'T FIGURE TO TAKE ME OUT BY SCARING ME TO DEATH WITH FUNNY NOISES, HOT-SHOT.
"THIS SPIDER-MAN IS REMARKABLY RESILIENT--
"--BUT OVER-CONFIDENT, NONETHELESS.
SPWAM!

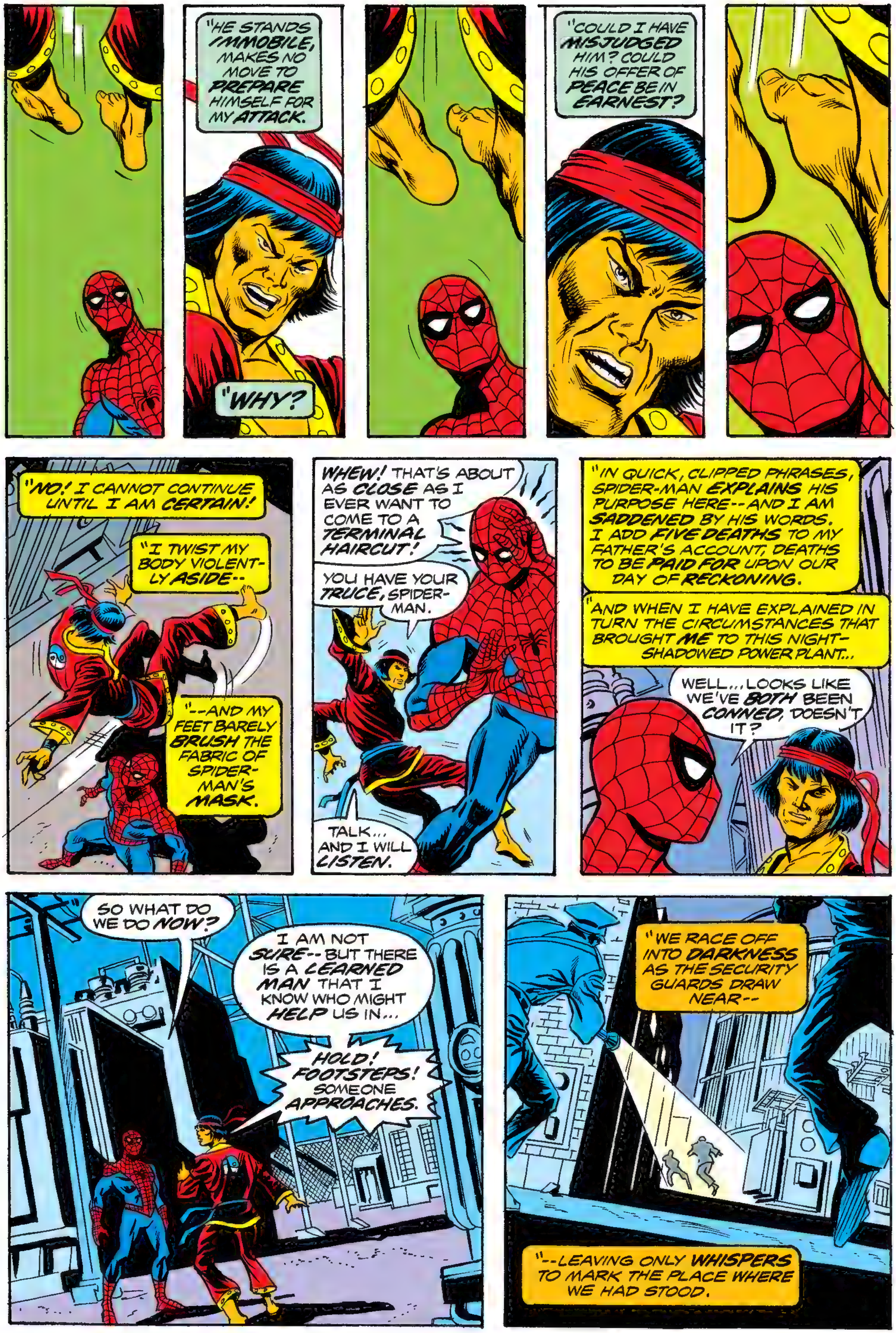

WILL YOU SURRENDER, SPIDER-MAN?
WHY? SO YOU CAN KILL ME TOO?
"HE IS DAZED-- BUT STILL HIS RESISTANCE FILLS THE AIR AS AN ALMOST-PHYSICAL PRESENCE.
SKAKT!
"I MOVE TO INCAPACITATE HIM--
"--BUT SPIDER-MAN MOVES AS WELL--
"--WITH A SPEED I HAVE RARELY BEFORE SEEN.
MISTER, THAT COULD'VE BEEN MY CHEST YOU CAVED IN INSTEAD OF THE WALL--
CHUD!
--AND THAT'S ONE MISTAKE I'M NOT GONNA LET YOU CORRECT!
"HE IS STUNNINGLY AGILE--
HUH?
"--BUT REGARDLESS, HE IS NOT ONE WHO HAS DEVOTED HIS LIFE TO LEARNING THE ARTS OF COMBAT AS I HAVE.
"DESPITE HIS STRENGTH, HIS SKILL, HIS STAMINA --STILL HE IS ONLY A SPIDER-MAN--
"--WHILE I AM A MASTER OF KUNG FU!
UUNNFF!
HATE TO ADMIT IT, SHANGY--BUT YOU'RE GOOD AT THIS KUNG FOOEY STUFF--
--A LOT BETTER THAN YOUR LATE, LAMENTED MUSCLE-BOYS!
WHUDD

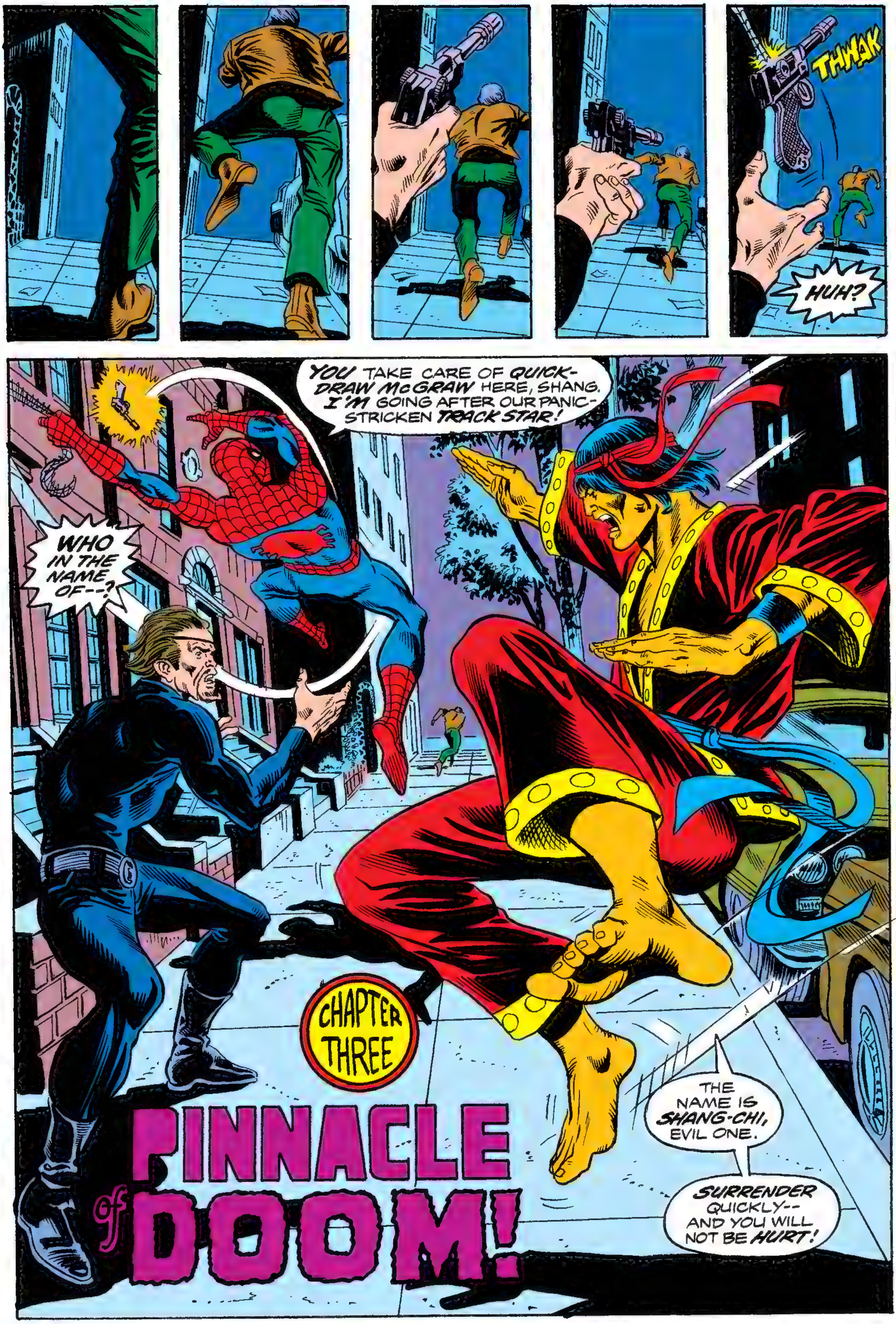

BUT DON'T THINK THAT FACT IS GONNA STOP ME FROM TRASHING YOU, FRIEND--
--'CAUSE, BELIEVE ME-- IT WON'T!
"FOR AN INSTANT, AS I STRIVE TO REGAIN MY BALANCE, MY WEIGHT RESTS AGAINST THE PLATFORM'S RAILING--
"--THEN GRAVITY OVERWHELMS ME--
"--AND I FALL!
"BUT I HAVE BEEN TRAINED TO FALL WELL.
PAK!
CHAK!
SMOOTH MOVE, SHANGY--BUT I'VE DECIDED NOT TO JOIN YOU DOWN THERE--
NOT WHEN I CAN FINISH YOU JUST AS EASILY FROM UP HERE!
"INCREDIBLE! HE STANDS SUSPENDED FROM THE CEILING, LIKE THE INSECT HE IS NAMED FOR.
"FOR ALL MY EDUCATION, EVEN I HAVE NEVER LEARNED HOW TO DEAL WITH AN OPPONENT WHO CAN IGNORE NATURE'S LAWS.
OKAY NOW, SHANGY-- YOU JUST STAND THERE--
--AND IT'LL ALL BE OVER IN A SECOND!
"THE STRANGE SUBSTANCE SPATTERS AGAINST THE SPOT I'VE SWIFTLY VACATED.
"WEBBING-- MUCH LIKE HIS SERVANTS USED EARLIER THIS NIGHT.
HEY! STAND STILL, WILL YA?
YOU HAVE ANY IDEA HOW EXPENSIVE THIS STUFF IS? I CAN'T AFFORD TO WASTE IT!
"LIKE SO MANY OTHERS, SPIDER-MAN TALKS TOO MUCH IN BATTLE.
"BUT UNLIKE THOSE OTHERS, I SENSE HE DOES NOT SPEAK TO BOLSTER HIS EGO, OR REINFORCE HIS COURAGE--

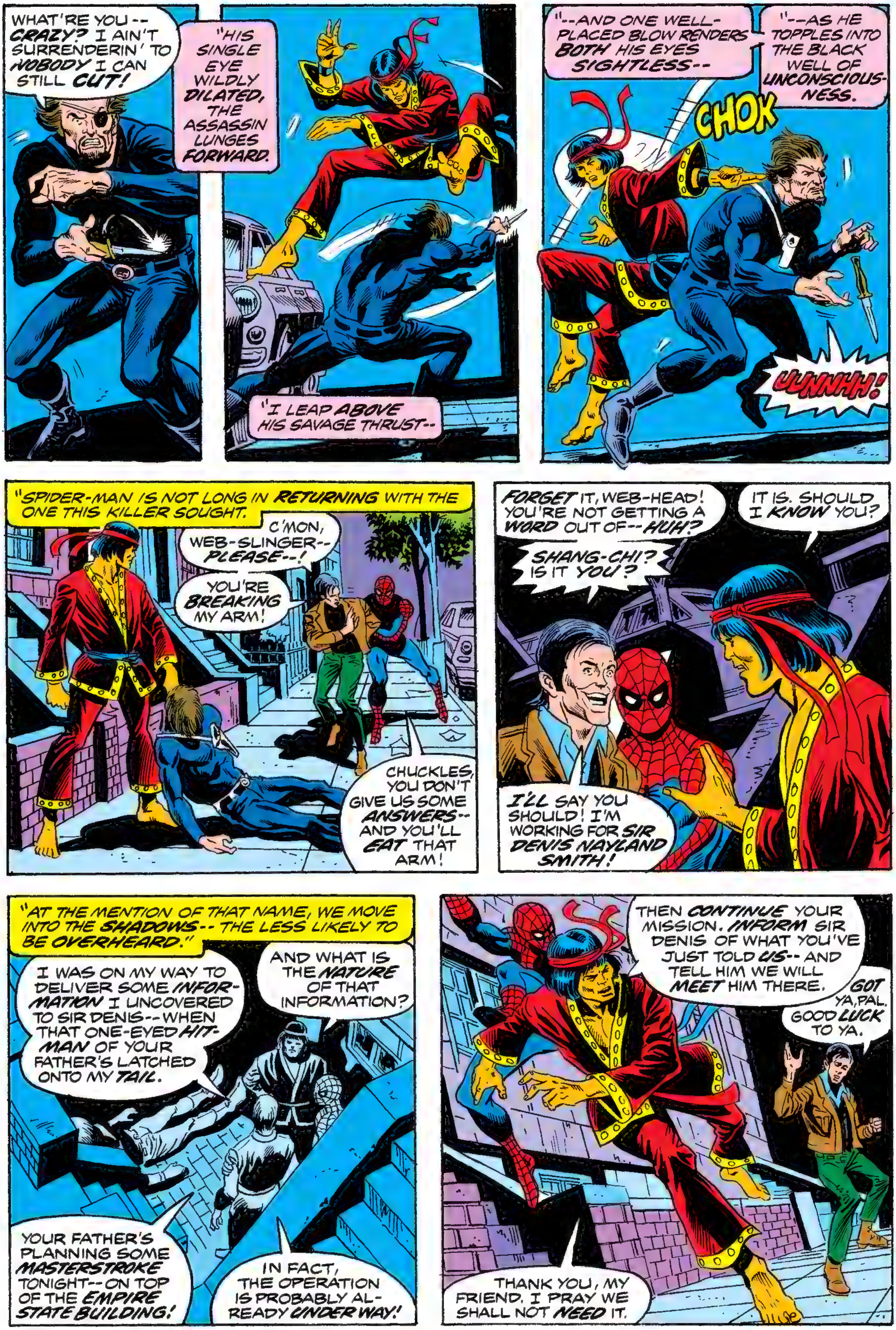

"--BUT TO CONFUSE HIS FOES TO DISTRACT THEM--
AHHH-- C'MON, SHANGY! STAY PUT!
MY FINGERS ARE STARTING TO GET CRAMPED!
"--A PLOY WHICH HAS PROVED MOST EFFECTIVE!
THAK!
"HE PINS MY ARM--
"--AND, QUICKLY, MY OTHER LIMBS AS WELL.
"TRAPPED! MUST CONCENTRATE--
"--CONCENTRATE--
"--LET MY STRENGTH FLOW INTO MY ARM --TO MY WRIST--
"--UNTIL I AM FREE!
SKRAKT!
"AN ASTONISHING CREATURE, THIS SPIDER-MAN. MY FATHER HAS CHOSEN WELL."
PWOK!
THOSE BRICKS--!
UUNNGH!
AN ASTONISHING "CREATURE" INDEED --FOR EVEN AS THE WEB-SLINGER FALLS...
TRYING TO BRING ME DOWN TO YOUR LEVEL, HUH?
WELL, OKAY, SHANGY-BOY-- I'M COMING--
SNAK!

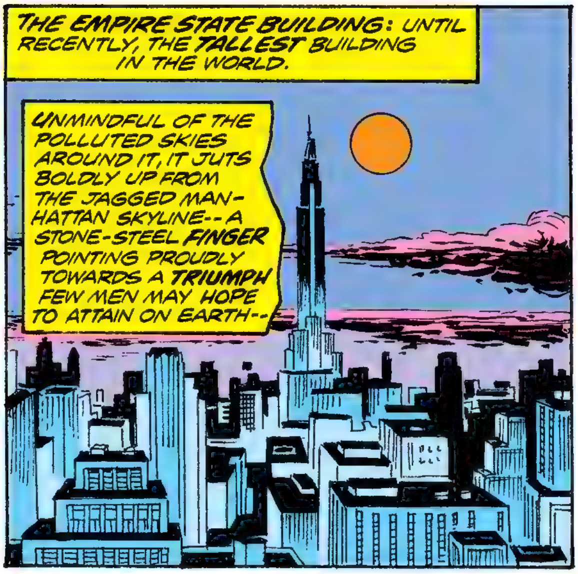

--BUT I'M COMING ON MY OWN TERMS!
"I REQUIRED AN INSTANT TO LONG TO RELEASE MYSELF.
"I FEEL THE RUSH OF AIR FROM THE VENTILATION SHAFT BEHIND ME, EVEN AS SPIDER-MAN'S FEET DRIVE INTO MY CHEST--
"--AND HIS MOMENTUM CARRIES US THRU THE PROTECTIVE GRATING--
OOPS!
KRANG!
"--AND DOWN INTO THE DARKNESS!
THERE SEEMS NO END TO THE PIT BELOW US, SPIDER-MAN!
BUT IF I AM TO PERISH, I PERISH GLADLY--
--KNOWING I HAVE SAVED THIS COMPLEX FROM DESTRUCTION AT YOUR HANDS!
"BUT MY TRIUMPH IS SHORT-LIVED, AS THE STEEL-SMOOTH PASSAGEWAY SUDDENLY DIVIDES--
"--AND SPIDER-MAN AND I ABRUPTLY GO OUR SEPERATE WAYS.
"I PLUNGE THRU UNYIELDING BLACKNESS--
"--MY HANDS UNABLE TO FIND ANY PURCHASE."
FOR THE RECORD, THE WALL-CRAWLER DOESN'T FARE MUCH BETTER.
"THE SHAFT CURVES BELOW ME, BECOMING A CHUTE.
"LIGHT INTRUDES UPON THE SHADOWS--
"--AND I BURST OUT THRU ANOTHER GRATING, ROLLING AS I HAVE LEARNED, TO ABSORB THE IMPACT OF MY FALL."
AGAIN, THE SAME HOLDS TRUE FOR A CERTAIN WEB-SLINGER, BUT AS HE ERUPTS THRU HIS GRATING...
WHEW! LET'S HEAR IT FOR AWKWARD LANDINGS! I'M JUST LUCKY THAT...
HEY! WAIT JUST ONE SECOND! DID SHANGY SAY WHAT I THINK HE JUST SAID?
YEP--HE SAID IT, ALL RIGHT--WHICH MEANS THAT SOMEBODY'S PLAYING US BOTH FOR SUCKERS!

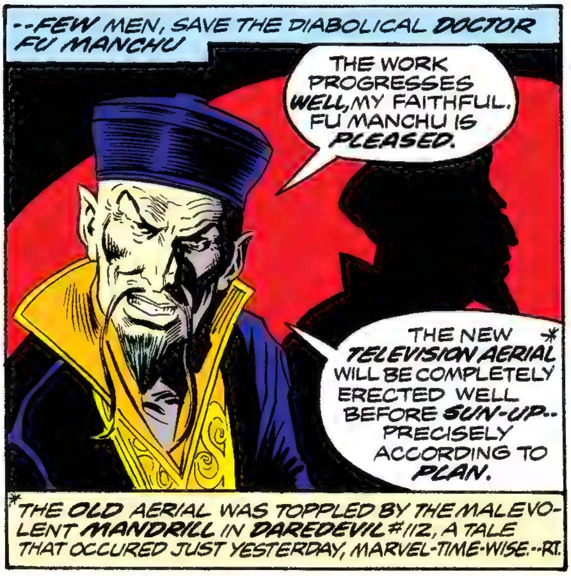

"I MOVE AMONG THE GENERATORS SILENTLY, MY EARS STRAINING TO HEAR ABOVE THE ALMOST-DEAFENING HUM. I SURVIVED MY DEATHFALL, SO SPIDER-MAN HAS ALMOST CERTAINLY SURVIVED HIS.
"AND IF SUCH IS THE CASE, HE IS STILL TO BE ATTENDED TO--ONE WAY OR ANOTHER."
AND, A SHORT DISTANCE AWAY, SIMILAR--YET DRASTICALLY DIFFERENT--THOUGHTS WHIRL THRU THE MIND OF THE WEB-SLINGER IN QUESTION...
GOT TO FIND SHANG-CHI--AND FAST!
IF WHAT I SPECULATE IS TRUE, WE'RE WASTING PRECIOUS TIME PUSSY-FOOTING AROUND THIS OVER-SIZED ERECTOR SET--
--WHILE LORD-KNOWS-WHAT IS COMING DOWN SOMEWHERE ELSE!
BIGGEST PROBLEM IS GONNA BE GETTING HIM TO LISTEN TO ME, BEFORE HE CAN KICK IN MY... HEY!
TURN, SPIDER-MAN--AND DEFEND YOURSELF!
SHANG-CHI--WAIT! I'VE GOT TO TALK TO YOU.
HOW ABOUT CALLING A TRUCE?
TO WHAT END, SPIDER-MAN? YOU HAVE ALLIED YOURSELF WITH MY FATHER, THE MASTER DECEIVER.
DO YOU TRULY THINK ME GULLIBLE ENOUGH TO BELIEVE A WORD YOU SAY?
C'MON, MISTER--GIVE IT A CHANCE! I DON'T WANT TO FIGHT YOU.
MURDERER... YOU HAVE NO CHOICE!
BUT YOU'RE WRONG, MISTER--I DO HAVE A CHOICE.
APPARENTLY, THERE'S ONLY ONE WAY TO CONVINCE YOU I'M SINCERE ABOUT THIS--
--BUT IF I'VE GOT YOU FIGURED WRONG, THEY'LL BE SCRAPING ME OFF THE WALLS OF THIS JOINT FOR THE NEXT TWENTY YEARS!

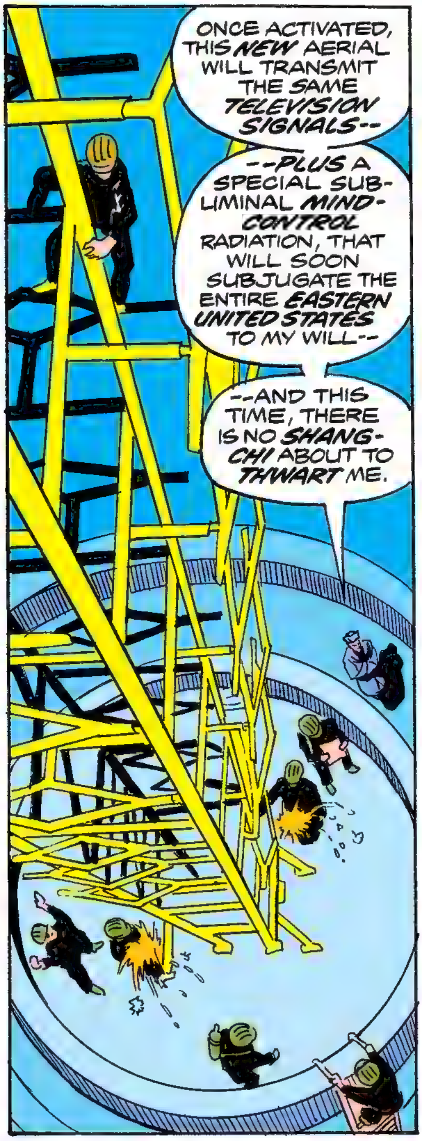

"HE STANDS IMMOBILE, MAKES NO MOVE TO PREPARE HIMSELF FOR MY ATTACK.
"WHY?
"COULD I HAVE MISJUDGED HIM? COULD HIS OFFER OF PEACE BE IN EARNEST?
"NO! I CANNOT CONTINUE UNTIL I AM CERTAIN!
"I TWIST MY BODY VIOLENTLY ASIDE--
"--AND MY FEET BARELY BRUSH THE FABRIC OF SPIDER-MAN'S MASK.
WHEW! THAT'S ABOUT AS CLOSE AS I EVER WANT TO COME TO A TERMINAL HAIRCUT!
YOU HAVE YOUR TRUCE, SPIDER-MAN.
TALK... AND I WILL LISTEN.
"IN QUICK, CLIPPED PHRASES, SPIDER-MAN EXPLAINS HIS PURPOSE HERE--AND I AM SADDENED BY HIS WORDS. I ADD FIVE DEATHS TO MY FATHER'S ACCOUNT, DEATHS TO BE PAID FOR UPON OUR DAY OF RECKONING.
"AND WHEN I HAVE EXPLAINED IN TURN THE CIRCUMSTANCES THAT BROUGHT ME TO THIS NIGHT-SHADOWED POWER PLANT...
WELL... LOOKS LIKE WE'VE BOTH BEEN CONNED, DOESN'T IT?
SO WHAT DO WE DO NOW?
I AM NOT SURE-- BUT THERE IS A LEARNED MAN THAT I KNOW WHO MIGHT HELP US IN...
HOLD! FOOTSTEPS! SOMEONE APPROACHES.
"WE RACE OFF INTO DARKNESS AS THE SECURITY GUARDS DRAW NEAR--
"--LEAVING ONLY WHISPERS TO MARK THE PLACE WHERE WE HAD STOOD.

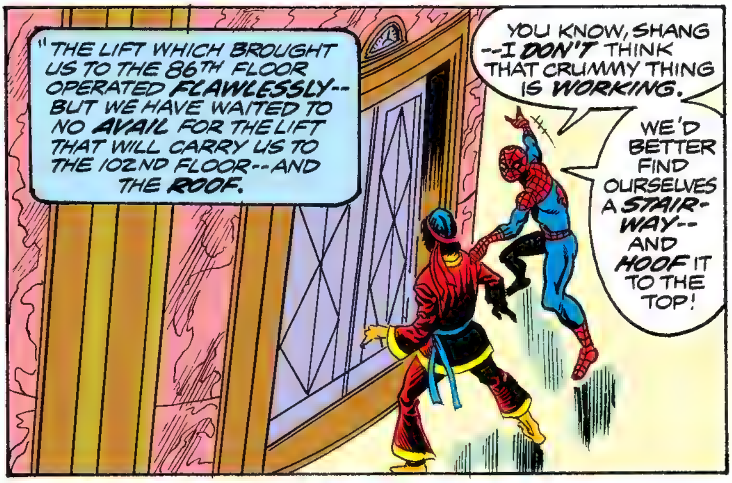

THWAK
HUH?
YOU TAKE CARE OF QUICK-DRAW McGRAW HERE, SHANG. I'M GOING AFTER OUR PANIC-STRICKEN TRACK STAR!
WHO IN THE NAME OF--?
CHAPTER THREE
PINNACLE of DOOM!
THE NAME IS SHANG-CHI, EVIL ONE.
SURRENDER QUICKLY-- AND YOU WILL NOT BE HURT!

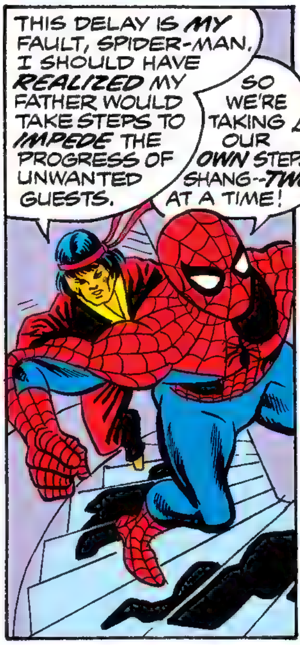

WHAT'RE YOU -- CRAZY? I AIN'T SURRENDERIN' TO NOBODY I CAN STILL CUT!
"HIS SINGLE EYE WILDLY DILATED, THE ASSASSIN LUNGES FORWARD.
"I LEAP ABOVE HIS SAVAGE THRUST--
"--AND ONE WELL-PLACED BLOW RENDERS BOTH HIS EYES SIGHTLESS--
"--AS HE TOPPLES INTO THE BLACK WELL OF UNCONSCIOUSNESS.
CHOK
UUNNHH!
"SPIDER-MAN IS NOT LONG IN RETURNING WITH THE ONE THIS KILLER SOUGHT.
C'MON, WEB-SLINGER-- PLEASE--!
YOU'RE BREAKING MY ARM!
CHUCKLES, YOU DON'T GIVE US SOME ANSWERS-- AND YOU'LL EAT THAT ARM!
FORGET IT, WEB-HEAD! YOU'RE NOT GETTING A WORD OUT OF-- HUH?
SHANG-CHI? IS IT YOU?
IT IS. SHOULD I KNOW YOU?
I'LL SAY YOU SHOULD! I'M WORKING FOR SIR DENIS NAYLAND SMITH!
"AT THE MENTION OF THAT NAME, WE MOVE INTO THE SHADOWS-- THE LESS LIKELY TO BE OVERHEARD."
I WAS ON MY WAY TO DELIVER SOME INFORMATION I UNCOVERED TO SIR DENIS-- WHEN THAT ONE-EYED HIT-MAN OF YOUR FATHER'S LATCHED ONTO MY TAIL.
AND WHAT IS THE NATURE OF THAT INFORMATION?
YOUR FATHER'S PLANNING SOME MASTERSTROKE TONIGHT-- ON TOP OF THE EMPIRE STATE BUILDING!
IN FACT, THE OPERATION IS PROBABLY ALREADY UNDER WAY!
THEN CONTINUE YOUR MISSION. INFORM SIR DENIS OF WHAT YOU'VE JUST TOLD US-- AND TELL HIM WE WILL MEET HIM THERE.
GOT YA, PAL. GOOD LUCK TO YA.
THANK YOU, MY FRIEND. I PRAY WE SHALL NOT NEED IT.

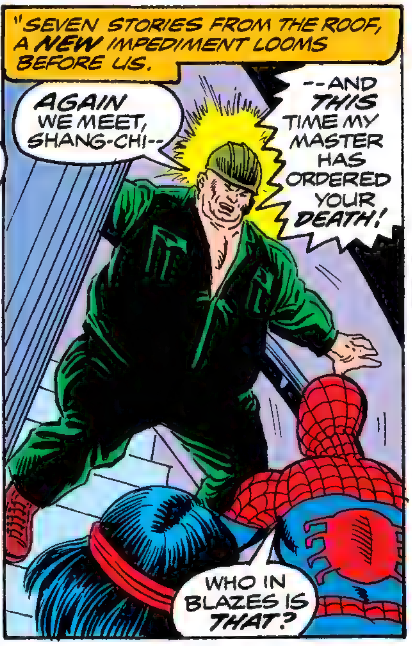

THE EMPIRE STATE BUILDING: UNTIL RECENTLY, THE TALLEST BUILDING IN THE WORLD.
UNMINDFUL OF THE POLLUTED SKIES AROUND IT, IT JUTS BOLDLY UP FROM THE JAGGED MANHATTAN SKYLINE--A STONE-STEEL FINGER POINTING PROUDLY TOWARDS A TRIUMPH FEW MEN MAY HOPE TO ATTAIN ON EARTH--

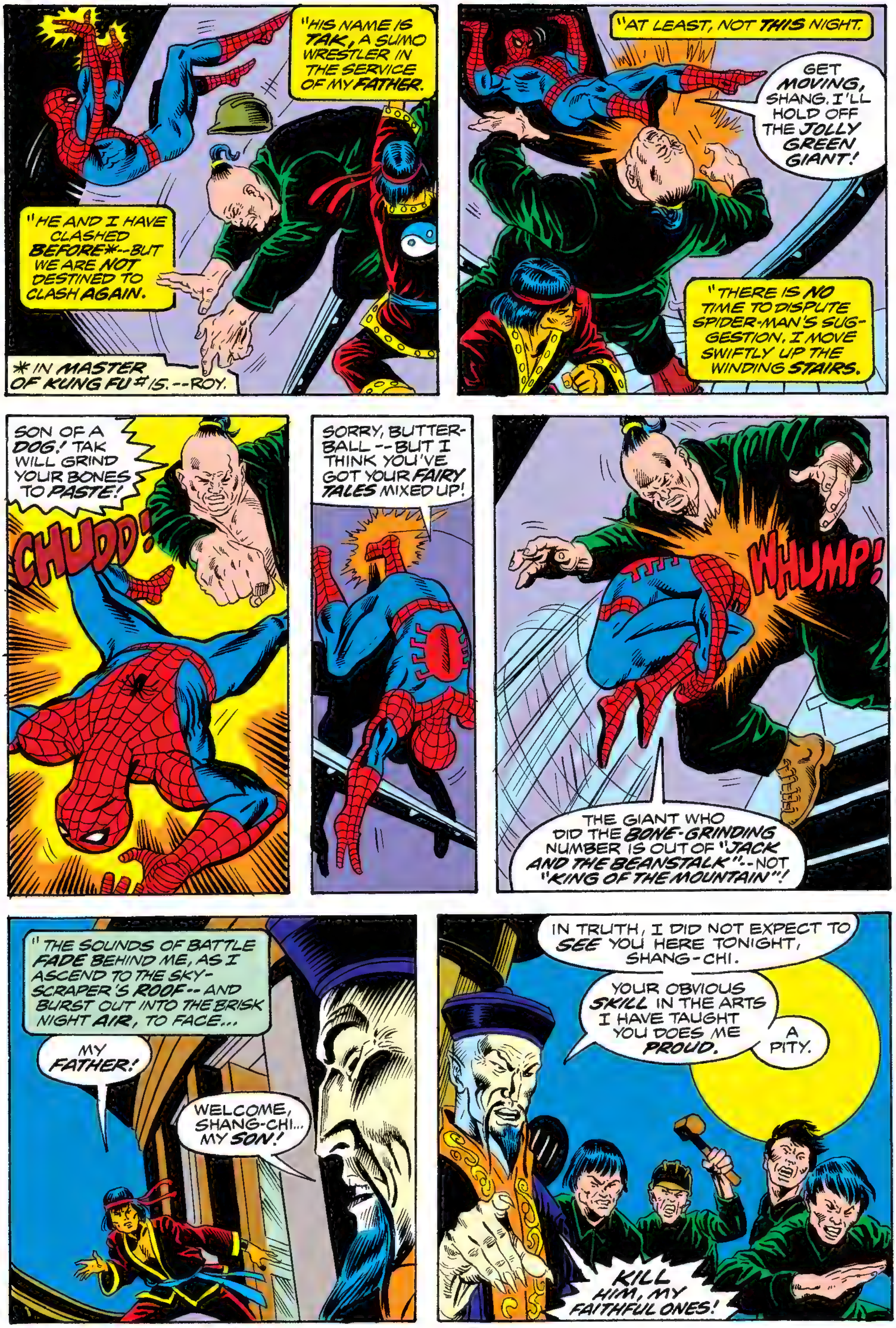

--FEW MEN, SAVE THE DIABOLICAL DOCTOR FU MANCHU
THE WORK PROGRESSES WELL, MY FAITHFUL. FU MANCHU IS PLEASED.
THE NEW* TELEVISION AERIAL WILL BE COMPLETELY ERECTED WELL BEFORE SUN-UP.. PRECISELY ACCORDING TO PLAN.
*THE OLD AERIAL WAS TOPPLED BY THE MALEVOLENT MANDRILL IN DAREDEVIL #112, A TALE THAT OCCURED JUST YESTERDAY, MARVEL-TIME-WISE.--RT.

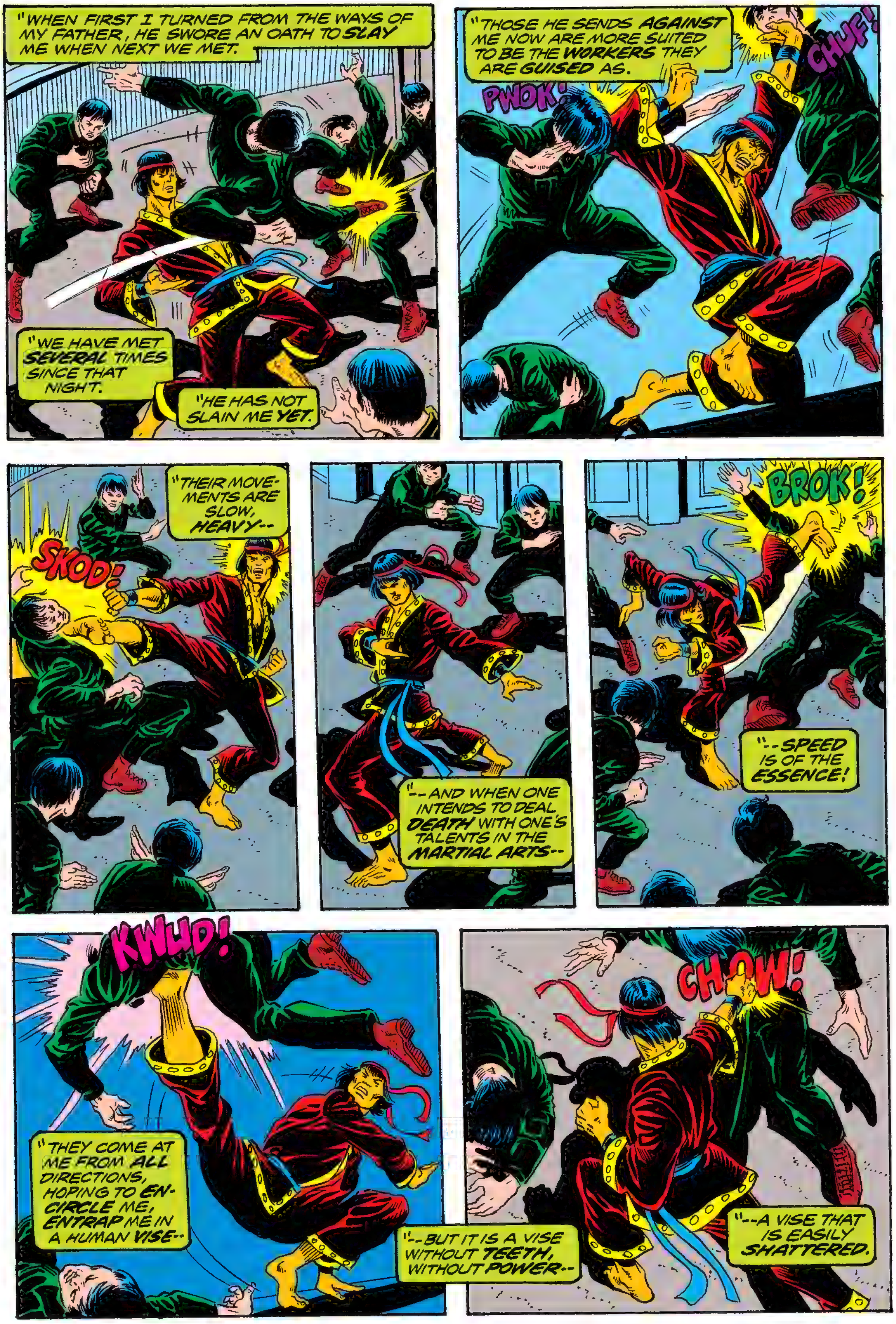

ONCE ACTIVATED, THIS NEW AERIAL WILL TRANSMIT THE SAME TELEVISION SIGNALS--
--PLUS A SPECIAL SUBLIMINAL MIND-CONTROL RADIATION, THAT WILL SOON SUBJUGATE THE ENTIRE EASTERN UNITED STATES TO MY WILL--
--AND THIS TIME, THERE IS NO SHANG-CHI ABOUT TO THWART ME.

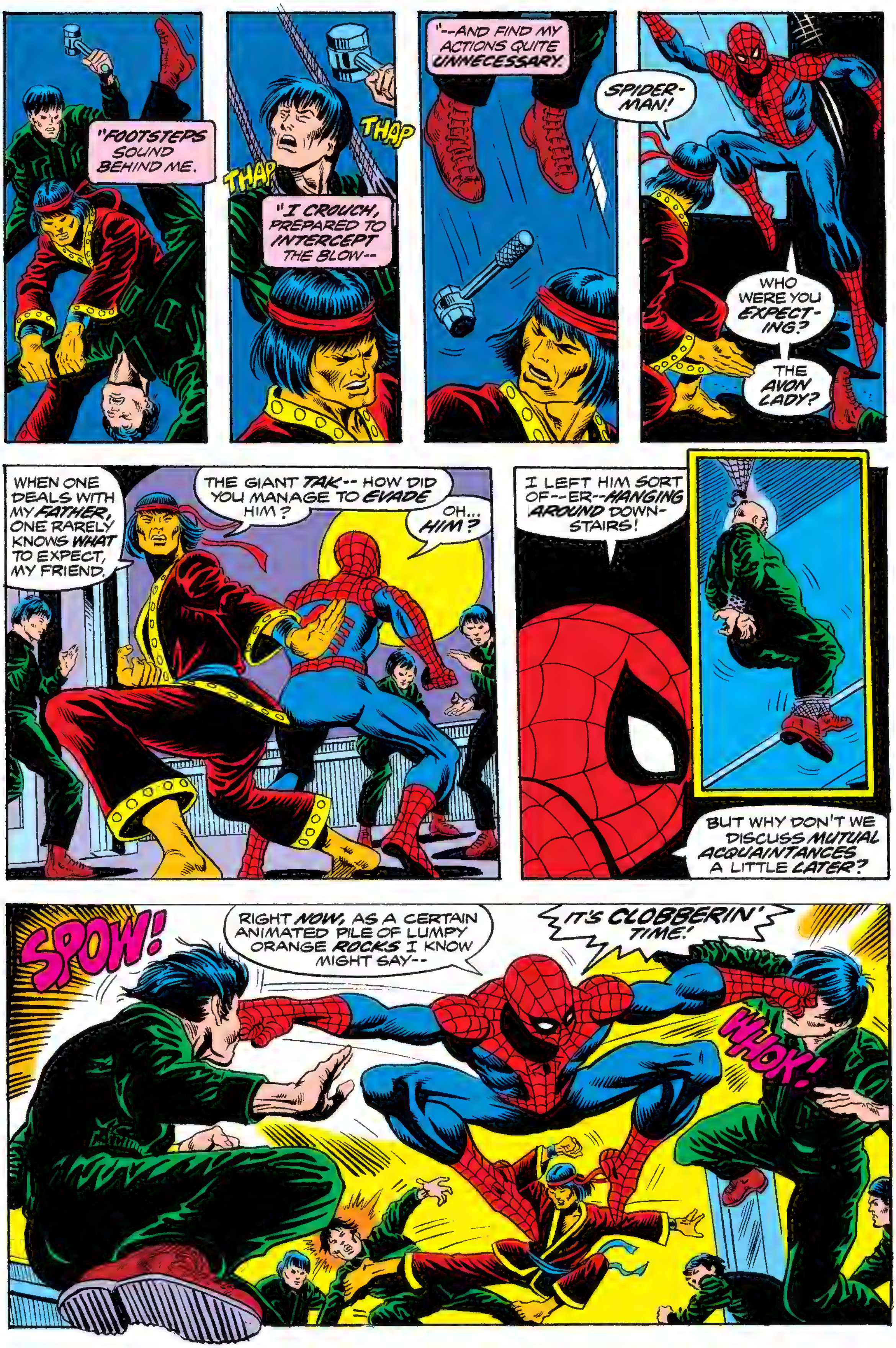

"THE LIFT WHICH BROUGHT US TO THE 86TH FLOOR OPERATED FLAWLESSLY--BUT WE HAVE WAITED TO NO AVAIL FOR THE LIFT THAT WILL CARRY US TO THE 102ND FLOOR--AND THE ROOF.
YOU KNOW, SHANG --I DON'T THINK THAT CRUMMY THING IS WORKING.
WE'D BETTER FIND OURSELVES A STAIRWAY--AND HOOF IT TO THE TOP!

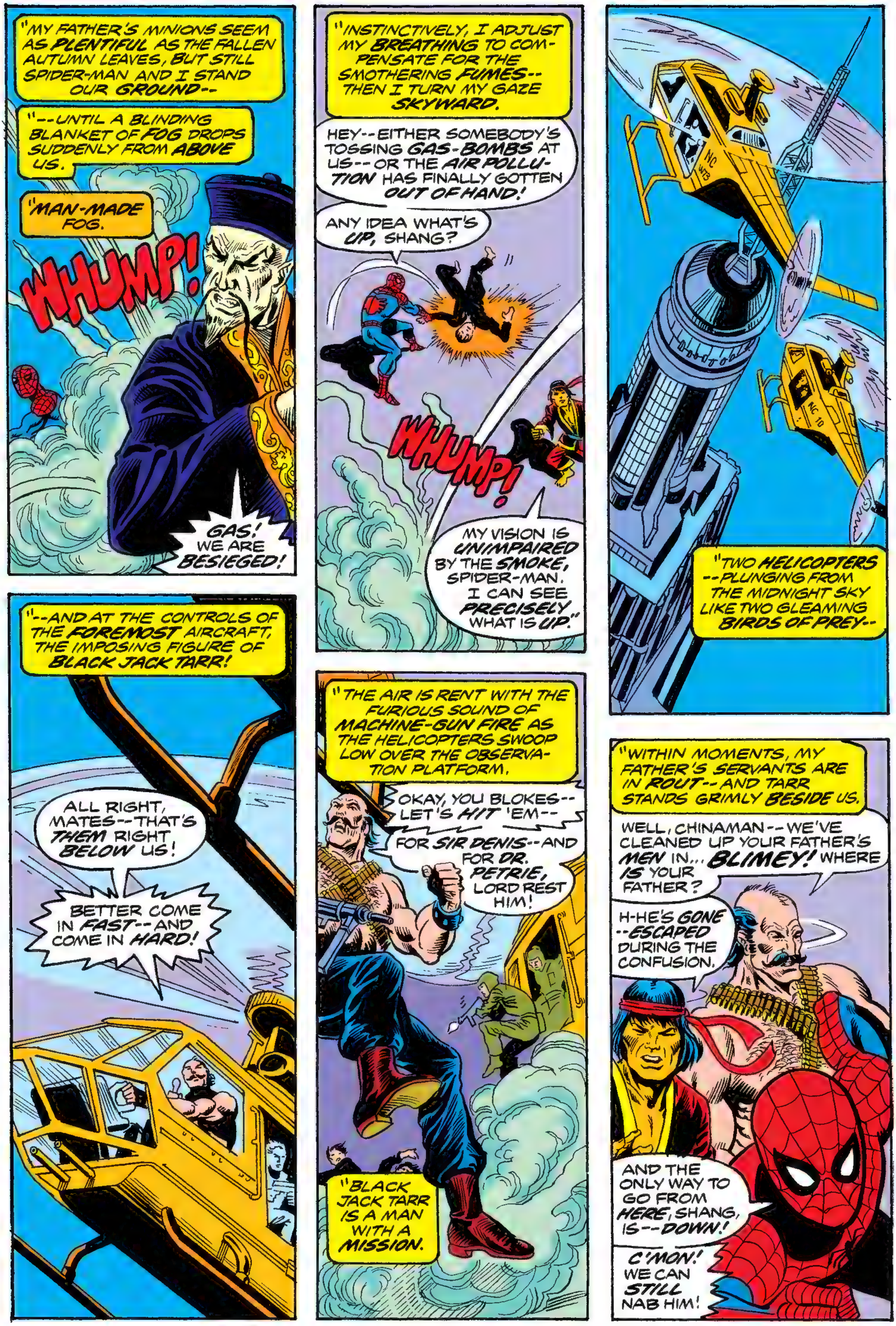

THIS DELAY IS MY FAULT, SPIDER-MAN. I SHOULD HAVE REALIZED MY FATHER WOULD TAKE STEPS TO IMPEDE THE PROGRESS OF UNWANTED GUESTS.
SO WE'RE TAKING OUR OWN STEPS, SHANG--TWO AT A TIME!

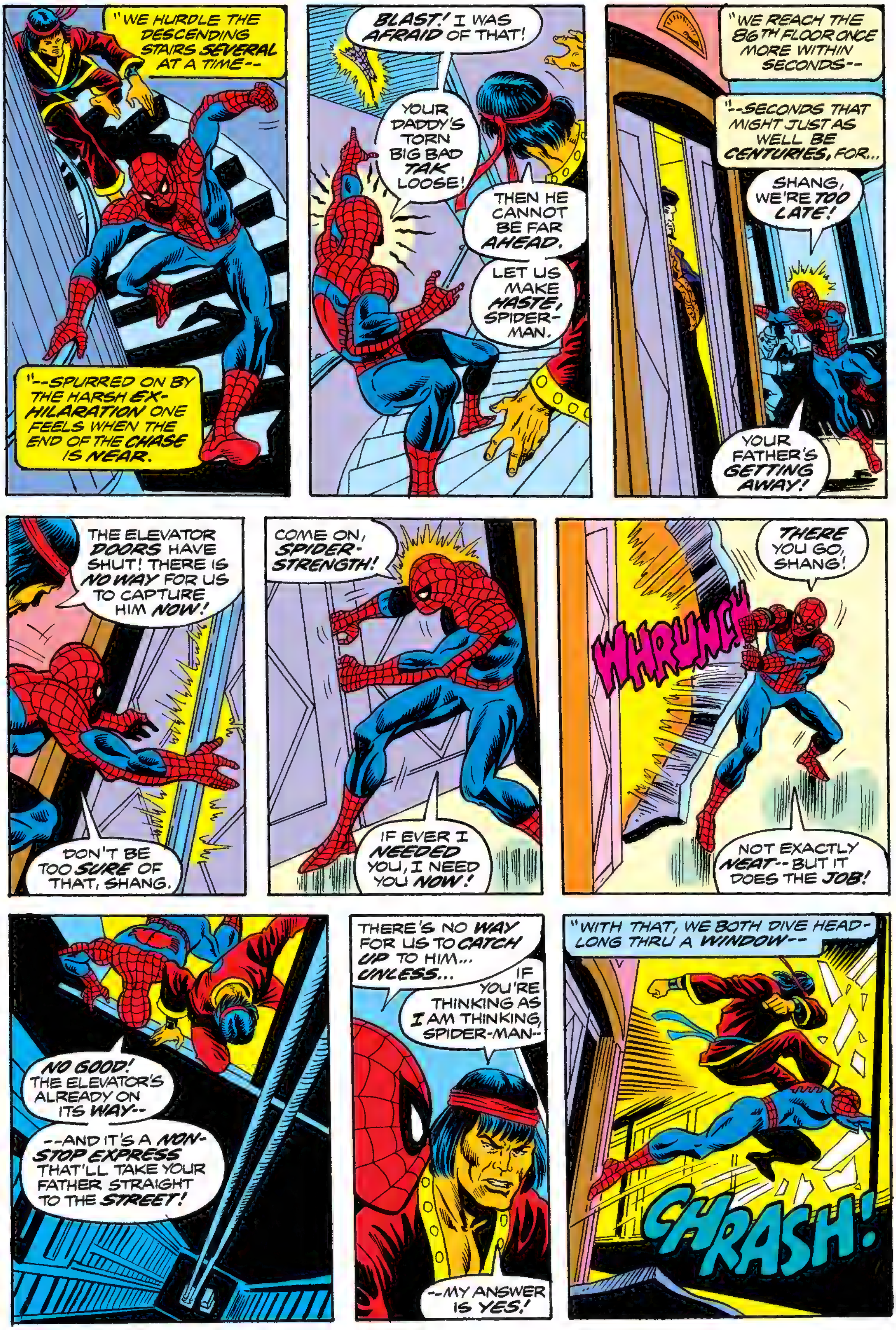

"SEVEN STORIES FROM THE ROOF, A NEW IMPEDIMENT LOOMS BEFORE US.
AGAIN WE MEET, SHANG-CHI--
--AND THIS TIME MY MASTER HAS ORDERED YOUR DEATH!
WHO IN BLAZES IS THAT?

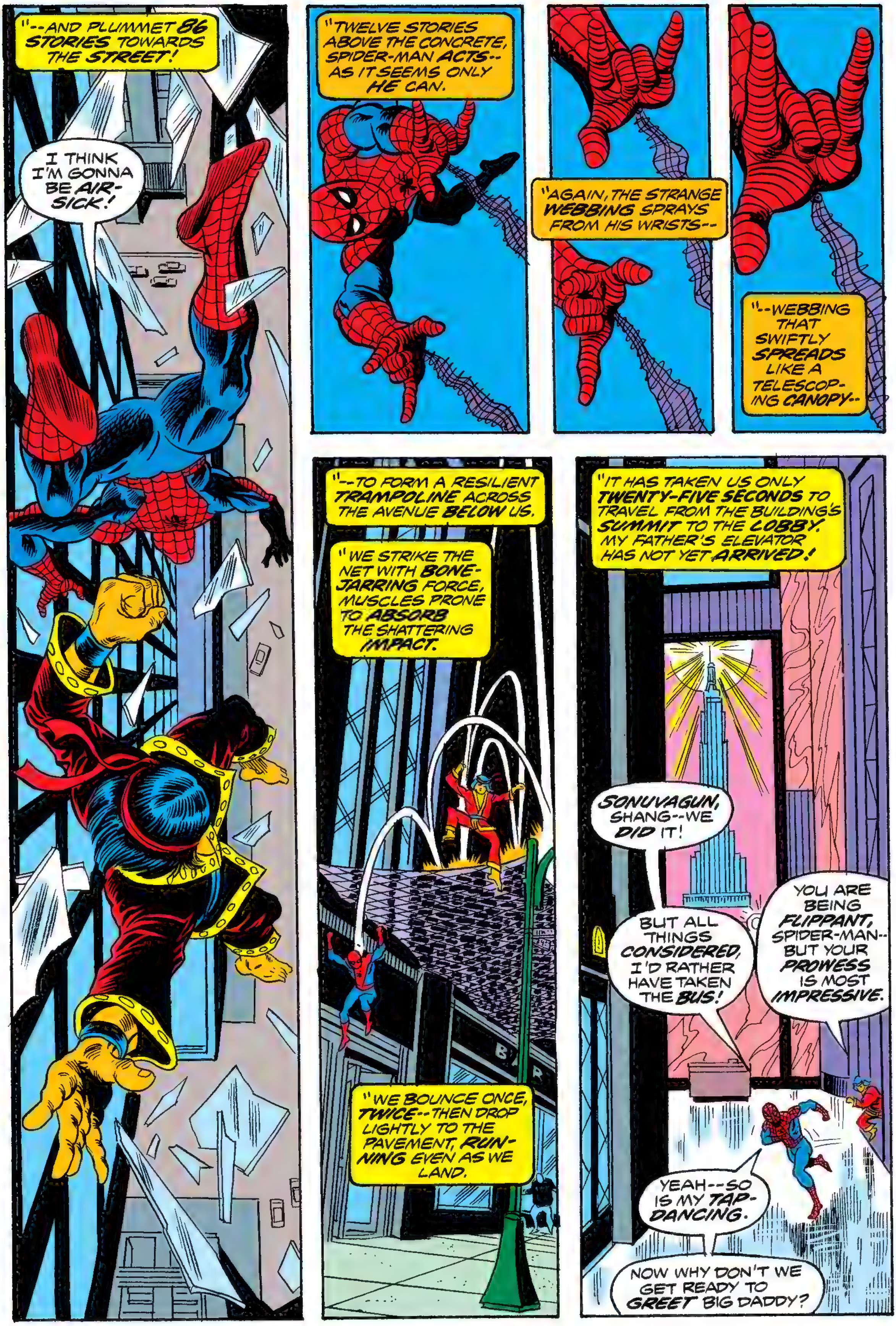

"HIS NAME IS **TAK**, A SUMO WRESTLER IN THE SERVICE OF MY **FATHER**.
"HE AND I HAVE CLASHED **BEFORE***--BUT WE ARE **NOT** DESTINED TO CLASH **AGAIN**.
* IN **MASTER OF KUNG FU** #15.--ROY.
"AT LEAST, NOT **THIS** NIGHT.
GET **MOVING**, SHANG. I'LL HOLD OFF THE **JOLLY GREEN GIANT**!
"THERE IS **NO** TIME TO DISPUTE SPIDER-MAN'S SUGGESTION. I MOVE SWIFTLY UP THE WINDING **STAIRS**.
SON OF A **DOG**! TAK WILL GRIND YOUR BONES TO **PASTE**!
CHUDD!
SORRY, BUTTERBALL--BUT I THINK YOU'VE GOT YOUR **FAIRY TALES** MIXED UP!
WHUMP!
THE GIANT WHO DID THE **BONE-GRINDING** NUMBER IS OUT OF "**JACK AND THE BEANSTALK**"--NOT "**KING OF THE MOUNTAIN**"!
"THE SOUNDS OF BATTLE **FADE** BEHIND ME, AS I ASCEND TO THE SKYSCRAPER'S **ROOF**--AND BURST OUT INTO THE BRISK NIGHT **AIR**, TO FACE...
MY **FATHER**!
WELCOME, SHANG-CHI... MY **SON**!
IN TRUTH, I DID NOT EXPECT TO **SEE** YOU HERE TONIGHT, SHANG-CHI.
YOUR OBVIOUS **SKILL** IN THE ARTS I HAVE TAUGHT YOU DOES ME **PROUD**.
A PITY.
KILL HIM, MY FAITHFUL ONES!

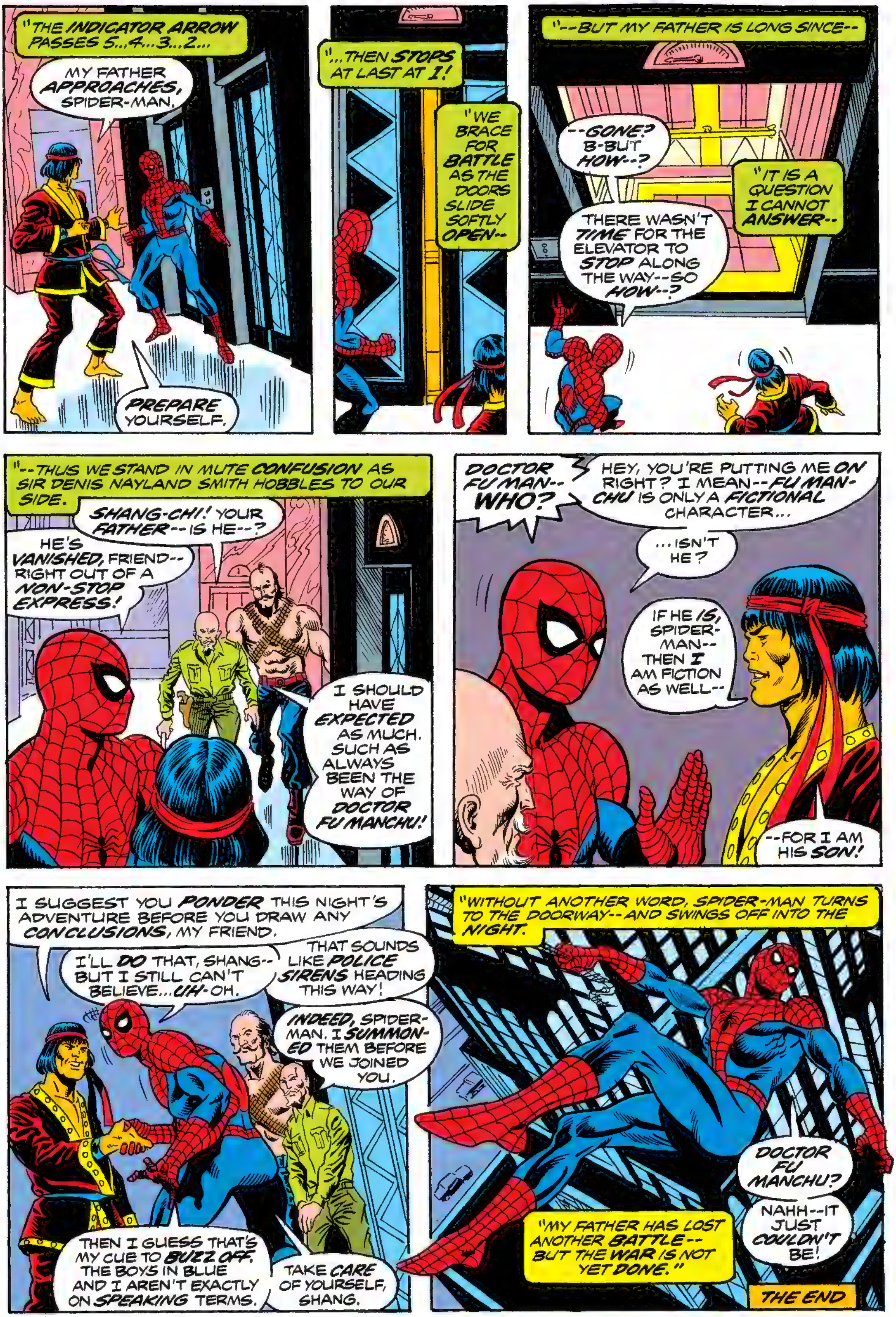

"WHEN FIRST I TURNED FROM THE WAYS OF MY FATHER, HE SWORE AN OATH TO SLAY ME WHEN NEXT WE MET.
"WE HAVE MET SEVERAL TIMES SINCE THAT NIGHT.
"HE HAS NOT SLAIN ME YET.
"THOSE HE SENDS AGAINST ME NOW ARE MORE SUITED TO BE THE WORKERS THEY ARE GUISED AS.
PWOK!
CHUF!
"THEIR MOVEMENTS ARE SLOW, HEAVY--
SKOD!
"--AND WHEN ONE INTENDS TO DEAL DEATH WITH ONE'S TALENTS IN THE MARTIAL ARTS--
BROK!
"--SPEED IS OF THE ESSENCE!
KWUD!
"THEY COME AT ME FROM ALL DIRECTIONS, HOPING TO ENCIRCLE ME, ENTRAP ME IN A HUMAN VISE--
"--BUT IT IS A VISE WITHOUT TEETH, WITHOUT POWER--
CHOW!
"--A VISE THAT IS EASILY SHATTERED.

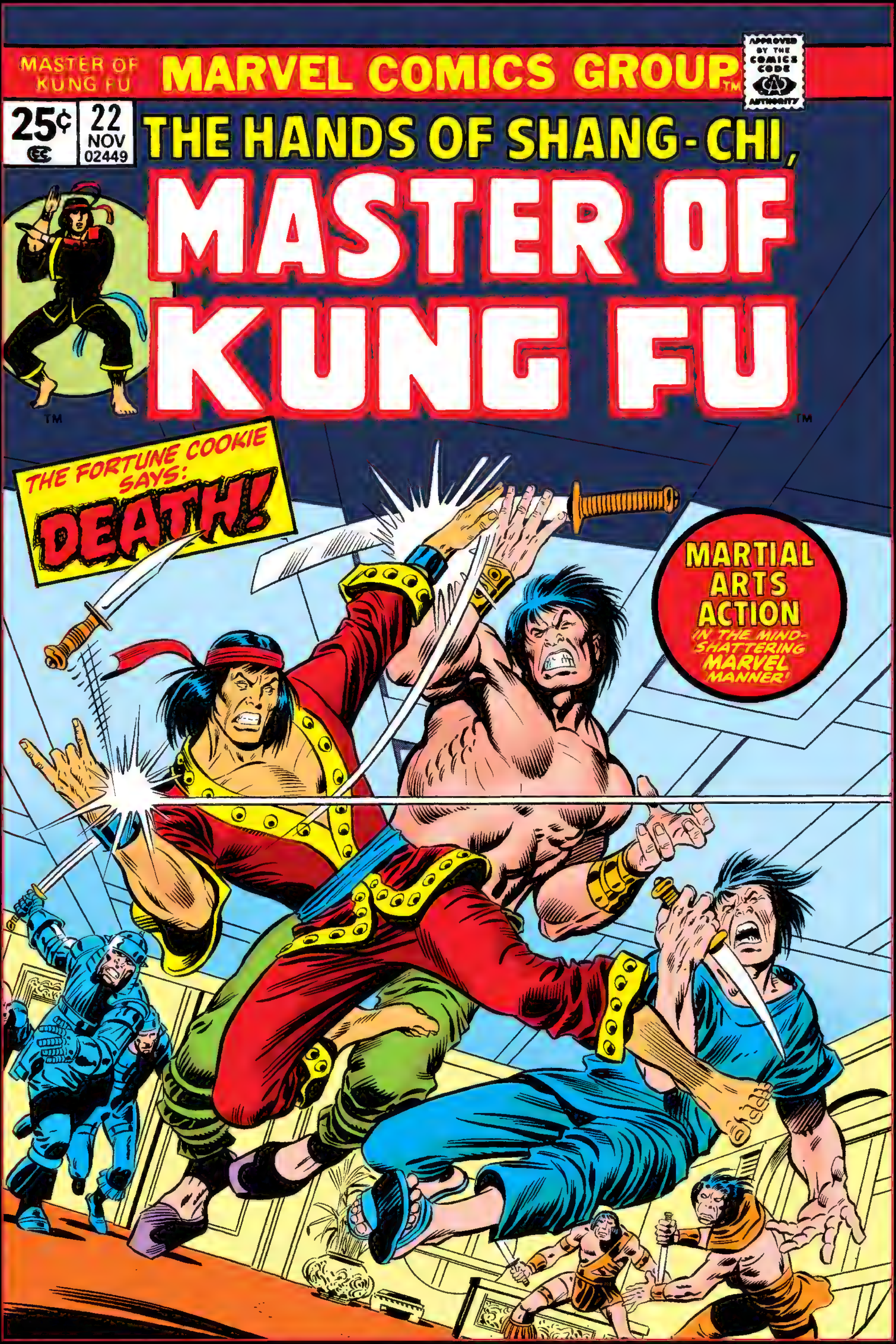

"FOOTSTEPS SOUND BEHIND ME.
THAP
THAP
"I CROUCH, PREPARED TO INTERCEPT THE BLOW--
"--AND FIND MY ACTIONS QUITE UNNECESSARY.
SPIDER-MAN!
WHO WERE YOU EXPECTING?
THE AVON LADY?
WHEN ONE DEALS WITH MY FATHER, ONE RARELY KNOWS WHAT TO EXPECT, MY FRIEND.
THE GIANT TAK-- HOW DID YOU MANAGE TO EVADE HIM?
OH... HIM?
I LEFT HIM SORT OF--ER--HANGING AROUND DOWNSTAIRS!
BUT WHY DON'T WE DISCUSS MUTUAL ACQUAINTANCES A LITTLE LATER?
SPOW!
RIGHT NOW, AS A CERTAIN ANIMATED PILE OF LUMPY ORANGE ROCKS I KNOW MIGHT SAY--
IT'S CLOBBERIN' TIME!
WHOK!


"MY FATHER'S MINIONS SEEM AS PLENTIFUL AS THE FALLEN AUTUMN LEAVES, BUT STILL SPIDER-MAN AND I STAND OUR GROUND--
"--UNTIL A BLINDING BLANKET OF FOG DROPS SUDDENLY FROM ABOVE US.
"MAN-MADE FOG.
WHUMP!
GAS! WE ARE BESIEGED!
"INSTINCTIVELY, I ADJUST MY BREATHING TO COMPENSATE FOR THE SMOTHERING FUMES-- THEN I TURN MY GAZE SKYWARD.
HEY--EITHER SOMEBODY'S TOSSING GAS-BOMBS AT US--OR THE AIR POLLUTION HAS FINALLY GOTTEN OUT OF HAND!
ANY IDEA WHAT'S UP, SHANG?
WHUMP!
MY VISION IS UNIMPAIRED BY THE SMOKE, SPIDER-MAN. I CAN SEE PRECISELY WHAT IS UP."
"TWO HELICOPTERS--PLUNGING FROM THE MIDNIGHT SKY LIKE TWO GLEAMING BIRDS OF PREY--
"--AND AT THE CONTROLS OF THE FOREMOST AIRCRAFT, THE IMPOSING FIGURE OF BLACK JACK TARR!
ALL RIGHT, MATES--THAT'S THEM RIGHT BELOW US!
BETTER COME IN FAST--AND COME IN HARD!
"THE AIR IS RENT WITH THE FURIOUS SOUND OF MACHINE-GUN FIRE AS THE HELICOPTERS SWOOP LOW OVER THE OBSERVATION PLATFORM.
OKAY, YOU BLOKES--LET'S HIT 'EM--
FOR SIR DENIS--AND FOR DR. PETRIE, LORD REST HIM!
"BLACK JACK TARR IS A MAN WITH A MISSION.
"WITHIN MOMENTS, MY FATHER'S SERVANTS ARE IN ROUT--AND TARR STANDS GRIMLY BESIDE US.
WELL, CHINAMAN--WE'VE CLEANED UP YOUR FATHER'S MEN IN... BLIMEY! WHERE IS YOUR FATHER?
H-HE'S GONE--ESCAPED DURING THE CONFUSION.
AND THE ONLY WAY TO GO FROM HERE, SHANG, IS--DOWN!
C'MON! WE CAN STILL NAB HIM!


"WE HURDLE THE DESCENDING STAIRS SEVERAL AT A TIME--
"--SPURRED ON BY THE HARSH EXHILARATION ONE FEELS WHEN THE END OF THE CHASE IS NEAR.
BLAST! I WAS AFRAID OF THAT!
YOUR DADDY'S TORN BIG BAD TAK LOOSE!
THEN HE CANNOT BE FAR AHEAD.
LET US MAKE HASTE, SPIDER-MAN.
"WE REACH THE 86TH FLOOR ONCE MORE WITHIN SECONDS--
"--SECONDS THAT MIGHT JUST AS WELL BE CENTURIES, FOR...
SHANG, WE'RE TOO LATE!
YOUR FATHER'S GETTING AWAY!
THE ELEVATOR DOORS HAVE SHUT! THERE IS NO WAY FOR US TO CAPTURE HIM NOW!
DON'T BE TOO SURE OF THAT, SHANG.
COME ON, SPIDER-STRENGTH!
IF EVER I NEEDED YOU, I NEED YOU NOW!
THERE YOU GO, SHANG!
WHRUNCH
NOT EXACTLY NEAT--BUT IT DOES THE JOB!
NO GOOD! THE ELEVATOR'S ALREADY ON ITS WAY--
--AND IT'S A NON-STOP EXPRESS THAT'LL TAKE YOUR FATHER STRAIGHT TO THE STREET!
THERE'S NO WAY FOR US TO CATCH UP TO HIM... UNLESS...
IF YOU'RE THINKING AS I AM THINKING, SPIDER-MAN--
--MY ANSWER IS YES!
"WITH THAT, WE BOTH DIVE HEADLONG THRU A WINDOW--
CHRASH!


"--AND PLUMMET 86 STORIES TOWARDS THE STREET!
I THINK I'M GONNA BE AIR-SICK!
"TWELVE STORIES ABOVE THE CONCRETE, SPIDER-MAN ACTS-- AS IT SEEMS ONLY HE CAN.
"AGAIN, THE STRANGE WEBBING SPRAYS FROM HIS WRISTS--
"--WEBBING THAT SWIFTLY SPREADS LIKE A TELESCOPING CANOPY--
"--TO FORM A RESILIENT TRAMPOLINE ACROSS THE AVENUE BELOW US.
"WE STRIKE THE NET WITH BONE-JARRING FORCE, MUSCLES PRONE TO ABSORB THE SHATTERING IMPACT.
"WE BOUNCE ONCE, TWICE--THEN DROP LIGHTLY TO THE PAVEMENT, RUNNING EVEN AS WE LAND.
"IT HAS TAKEN US ONLY TWENTY-FIVE SECONDS TO TRAVEL FROM THE BUILDING'S SUMMIT TO THE LOBBY. MY FATHER'S ELEVATOR HAS NOT YET ARRIVED!
SONUVAGUN, SHANG--WE DID IT!
BUT ALL THINGS CONSIDERED, I'D RATHER HAVE TAKEN THE BUS!
YOU ARE BEING FLIPPANT, SPIDER-MAN-- BUT YOUR PROWESS IS MOST IMPRESSIVE.
YEAH--SO IS MY TAP-DANCING.
NOW WHY DON'T WE GET READY TO GREET BIG DADDY?


"THE INDICATOR ARROW PASSES 5...4...3...2...
MY FATHER APPROACHES, SPIDER-MAN.
PREPARE YOURSELF.
"...THEN STOPS AT LAST AT 1!
"WE BRACE FOR BATTLE AS THE DOORS SLIDE SOFTLY OPEN--
"--BUT MY FATHER IS LONG SINCE--
--GONE? B-BUT HOW--?
"IT IS A QUESTION I CANNOT ANSWER--
THERE WASN'T TIME FOR THE ELEVATOR TO STOP ALONG THE WAY--SO HOW--?
"--THUS WE STAND IN MUTE CONFUSION AS SIR DENIS NAYLAND SMITH HOBBLES TO OUR SIDE.
SHANG-CHI! YOUR FATHER--IS HE--?
HE'S VANISHED, FRIEND--RIGHT OUT OF A NON-STOP EXPRESS!
I SHOULD HAVE EXPECTED AS MUCH. SUCH AS ALWAYS BEEN THE WAY OF DOCTOR FU MANCHU!
DOCTOR FU MAN--WHO?
HEY, YOU'RE PUTTING ME ON RIGHT? I MEAN--FU MAN-CHU IS ONLY A FICTIONAL CHARACTER...
...ISN'T HE?
IF HE IS, SPIDER-MAN--THEN I AM FICTION AS WELL--
--FOR I AM HIS SON!
I SUGGEST YOU PONDER THIS NIGHT'S ADVENTURE BEFORE YOU DRAW ANY CONCLUSIONS, MY FRIEND.
I'LL DO THAT, SHANG--BUT I STILL CAN'T BELIEVE...UH-OH.
THAT SOUNDS LIKE POLICE SIRENS HEADING THIS WAY!
INDEED, SPIDER-MAN. I SUMMONED THEM BEFORE WE JOINED YOU.
THEN I GUESS THAT'S MY CUE TO BUZZ OFF. THE BOYS IN BLUE AND I AREN'T EXACTLY ON SPEAKING TERMS.
TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF, SHANG.
"WITHOUT ANOTHER WORD, SPIDER-MAN TURNS TO THE DOORWAY--AND SWINGS OFF INTO THE NIGHT.
DOCTOR FU MANCHU?
NAHH--IT JUST COULDN'T BE!
"MY FATHER HAS LOST ANOTHER BATTLE--BUT THE WAR IS NOT YET DONE."
THE END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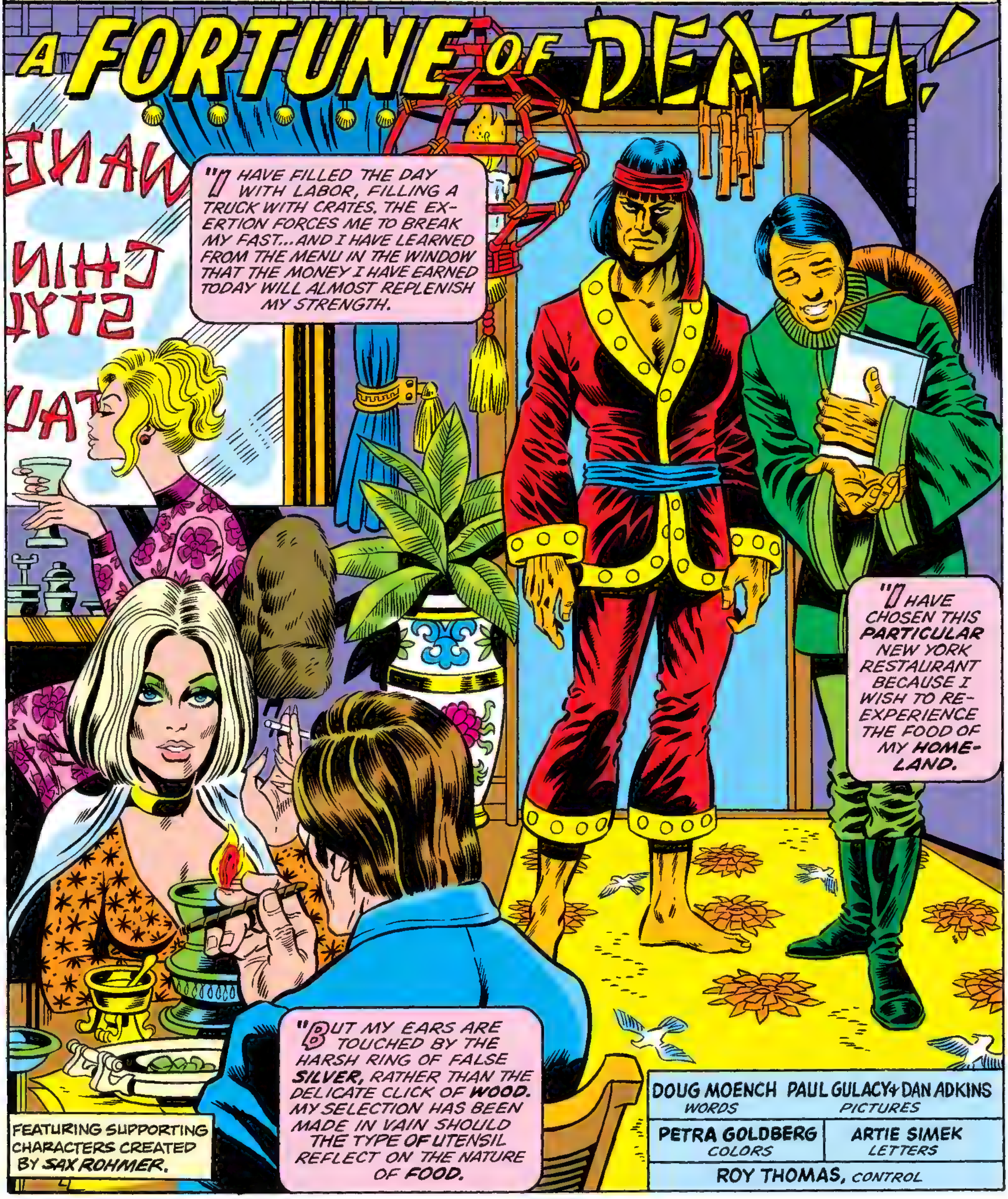
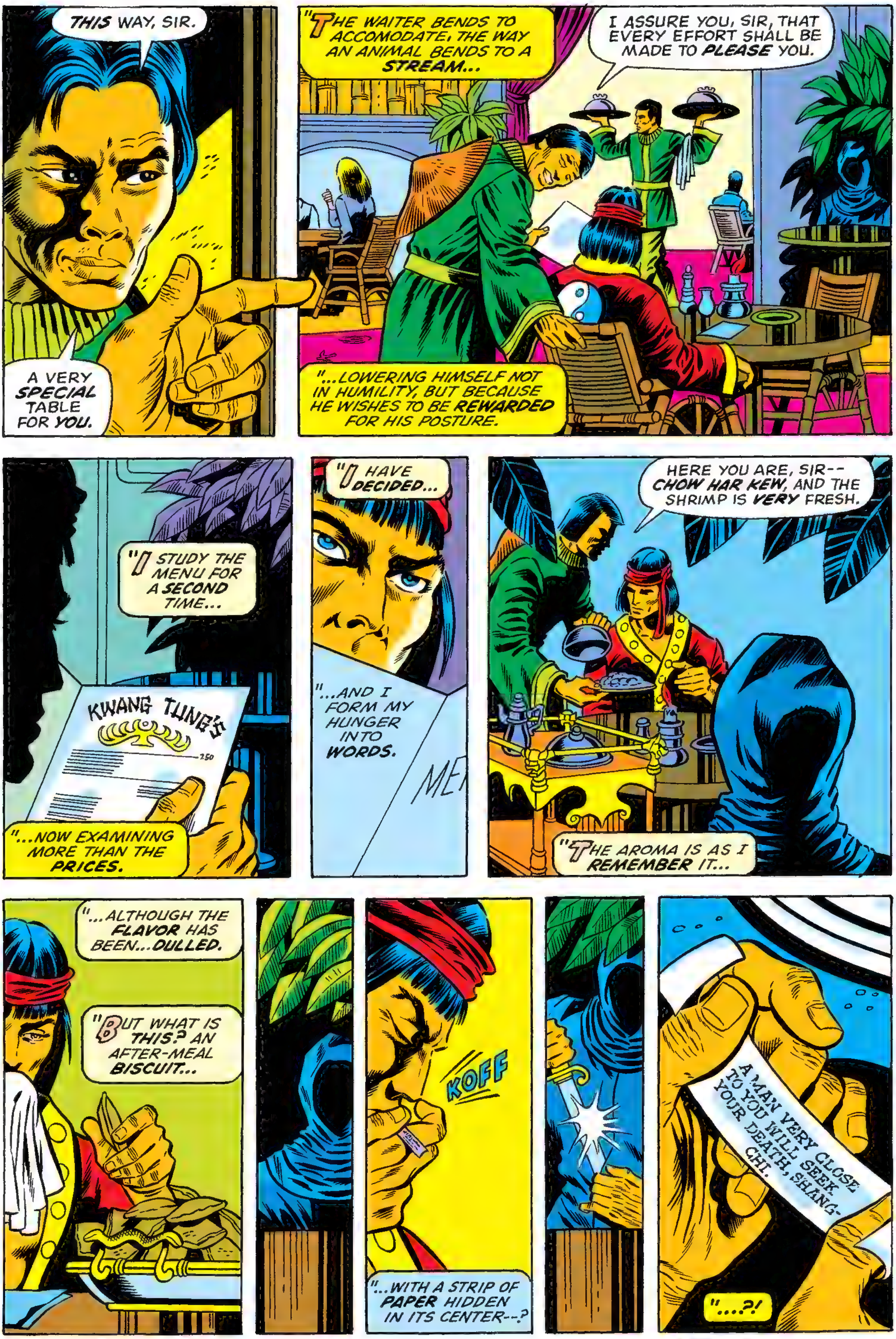
THE HANDS OF SHANG-CHI,
MASTER OF KUNG FU
™
™
THE FORTUNE COOKIE SAYS: DEATH!
MARTIAL ARTS ACTION IN THE MIND-SHATTERING MARVEL MANNER!

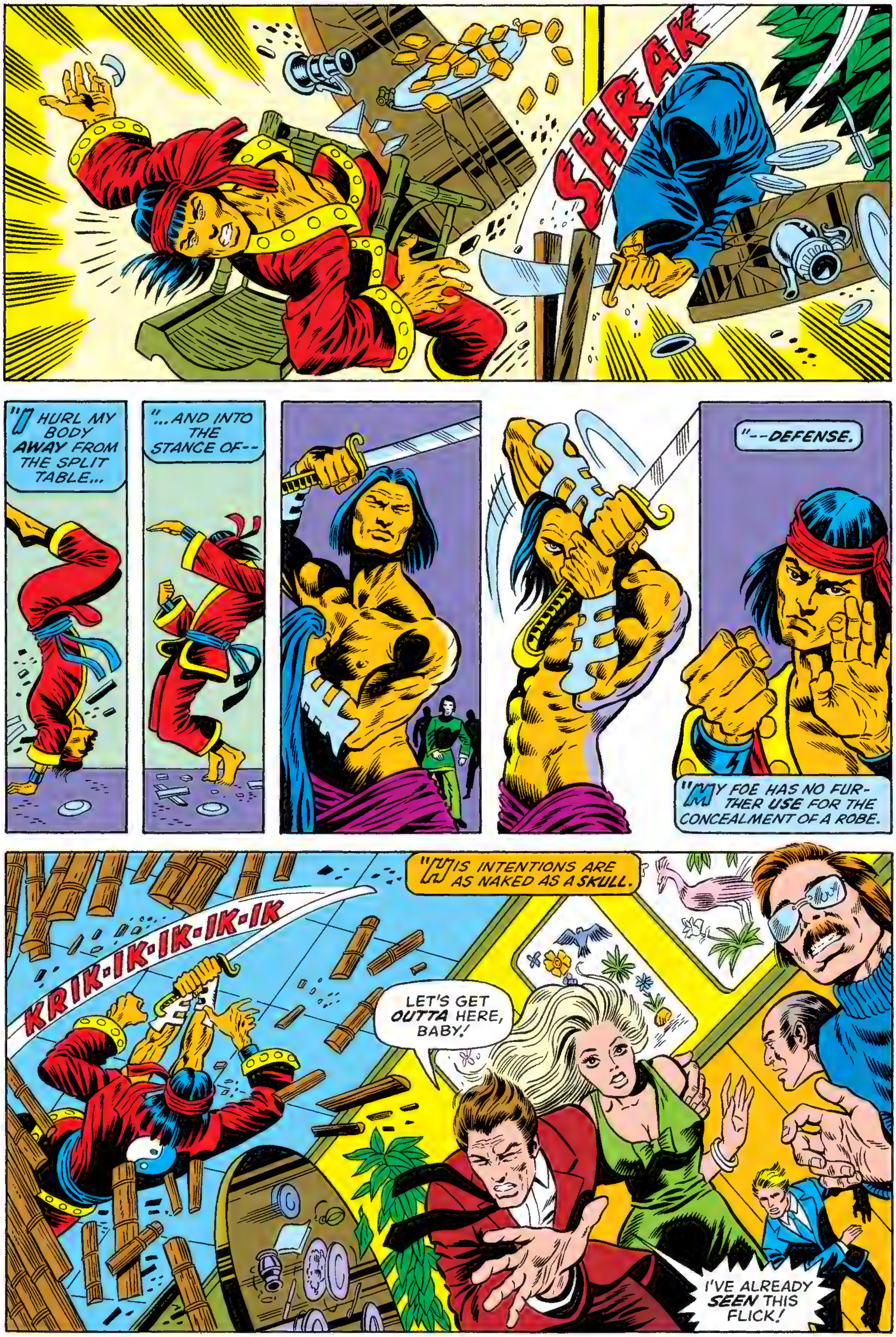
"Call me Shang-Chi, as my *father* did, when he raised me and molded my mind and my body in the vacuum of his Honan, China, retreat. I learned many things from my father: That my name means "The Rising and Advancing of a Spirit," that my body could be forged into a living weapon through the discipline of kung fu, and that it might be used for the murder of a man called Dr. Petrie.

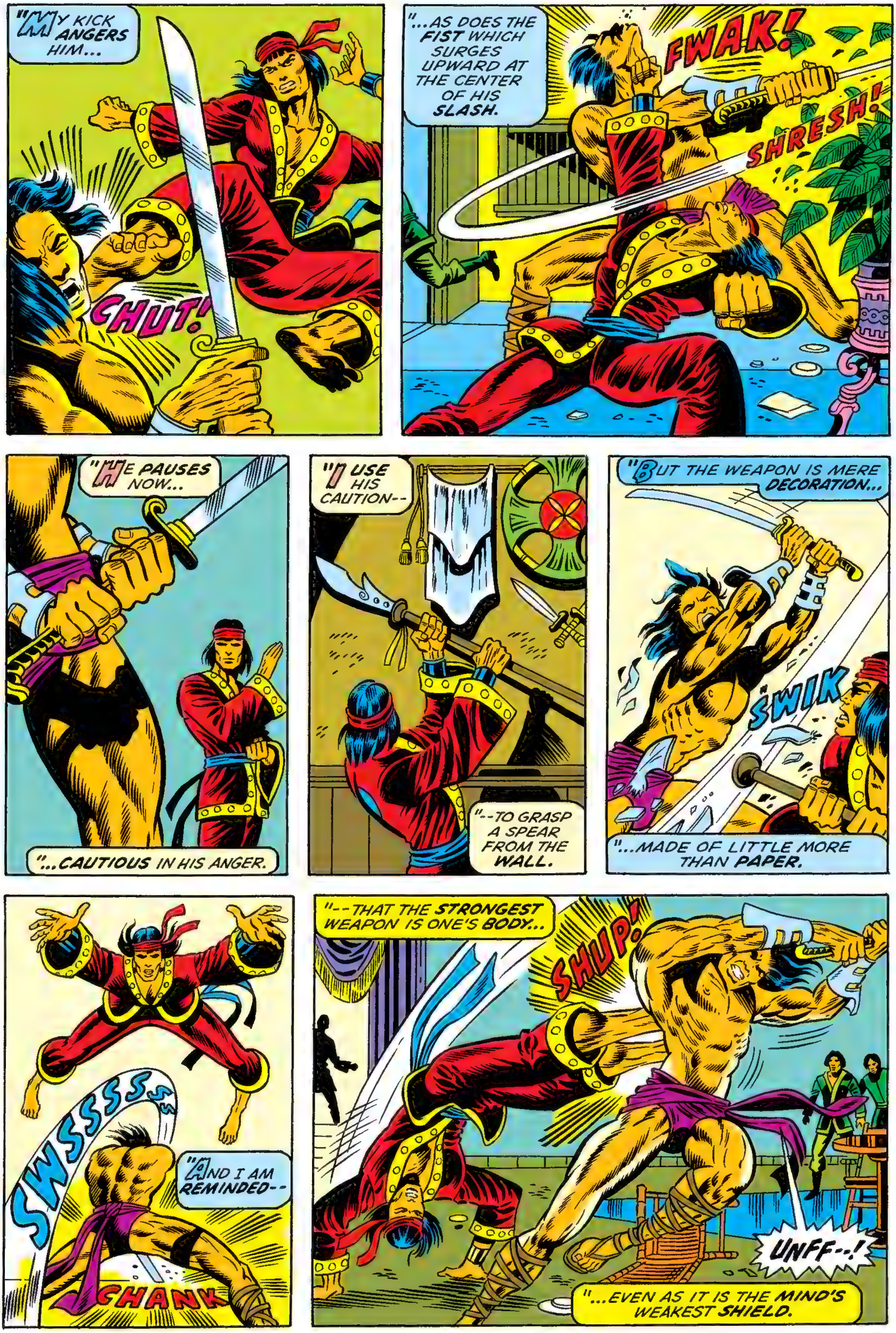
"Since then, I have learned that my father is **Dr. Fu Manchu**, the most insidiously evil man on earth... and that to *honor* him would bring nothing but *dishonor* to the spirit of my *name*."

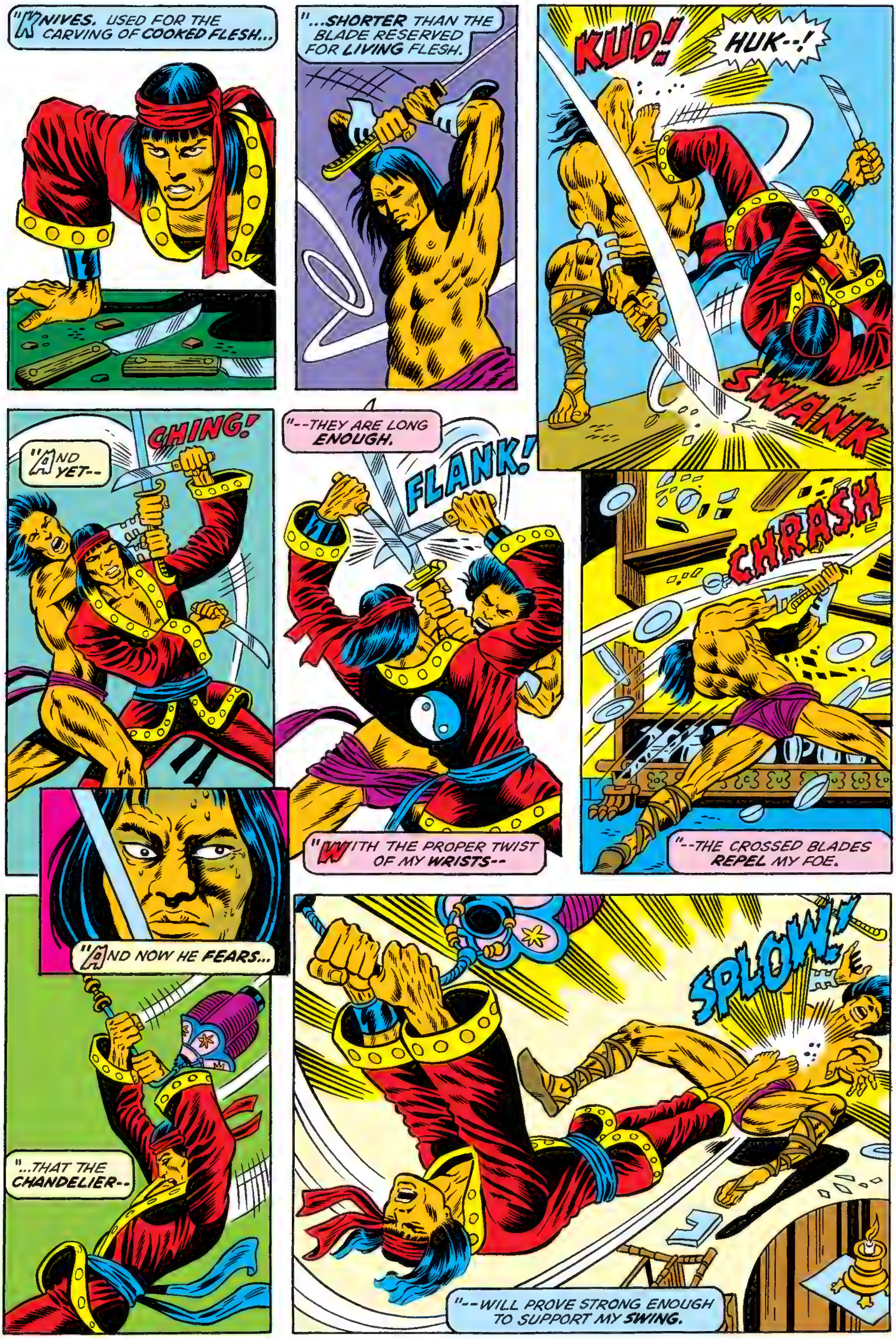
STAN LEE PRESENTS: MASTER OF KUNG FU!™

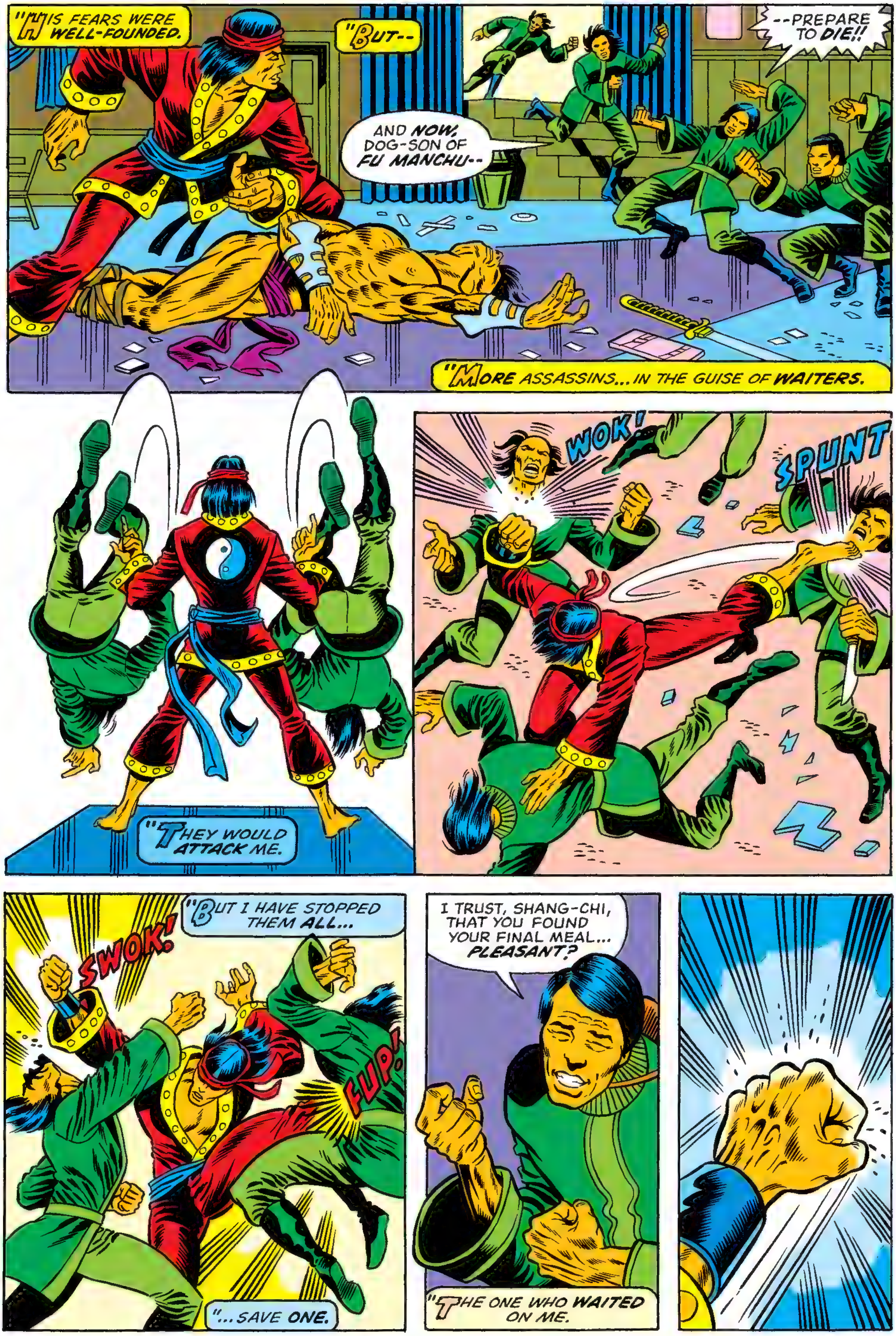

A FORTUNE OF DEATH!
"I HAVE FILLED THE DAY WITH LABOR, FILLING A TRUCK WITH CRATES. THE EXERTION FORCES ME TO BREAK MY FAST...AND I HAVE LEARNED FROM THE MENU IN THE WINDOW THAT THE MONEY I HAVE EARNED TODAY WILL ALMOST REPLENISH MY STRENGTH.
"I HAVE CHOSEN THIS **PARTICULAR** NEW YORK RESTAURANT BECAUSE I WISH TO RE-EXPERIENCE THE FOOD OF MY **HOMELAND.**
"BUT MY EARS ARE TOUCHED BY THE HARSH RING OF FALSE **SILVER**, RATHER THAN THE DELICATE CLICK OF **WOOD**. MY SELECTION HAS BEEN MADE IN VAIN SHOULD THE TYPE OF UTENSIL REFLECT ON THE NATURE OF **FOOD**.
FEATURING SUPPORTING CHARACTERS CREATED BY *SAX ROHMER*.
DOUG MOENCH *WORDS*
PAUL GULACY & DAN ADKINS *PICTURES*
PETRA GOLDBERG *COLORS*
ARTIE SIMEK *LETTERS*
ROY THOMAS, *CONTROL*

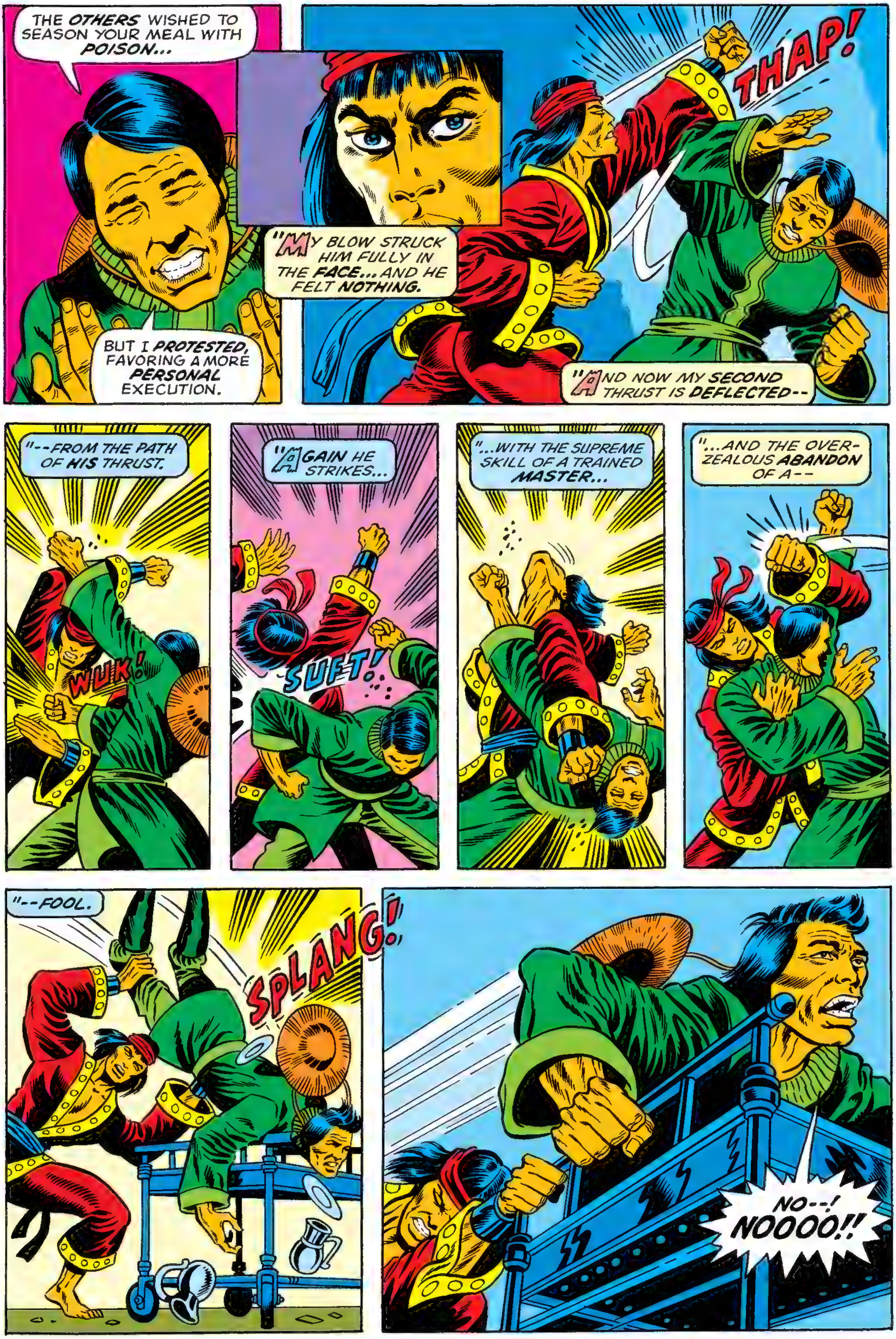

THIS WAY, SIR.
A VERY SPECIAL TABLE FOR YOU.
"THE WAITER BENDS TO ACCOMODATE, THE WAY AN ANIMAL BENDS TO A STREAM...
I ASSURE YOU, SIR, THAT EVERY EFFORT SHALL BE MADE TO PLEASE YOU.
"...LOWERING HIMSELF NOT IN HUMILITY, BUT BECAUSE HE WISHES TO BE REWARDED FOR HIS POSTURE.
"I STUDY THE MENU FOR A SECOND TIME...
KWANG TUNG'S
250
"...NOW EXAMINING MORE THAN THE PRICES.
"I HAVE DECIDED...
"...AND I FORM MY HUNGER INTO WORDS.
ME
HERE YOU ARE, SIR-- CHOW HAR KEW, AND THE SHRIMP IS VERY FRESH.
"THE AROMA IS AS I REMEMBER IT...
"...ALTHOUGH THE FLAVOR HAS BEEN...DULLED.
"BUT WHAT IS THIS? AN AFTER-MEAL BISCUIT...
KOFF
"...WITH A STRIP OF PAPER HIDDEN IN ITS CENTER--?
A MAN VERY CLOSE TO YOU WILL SEEK YOUR DEATH, SHANG-CHI.
"...?!

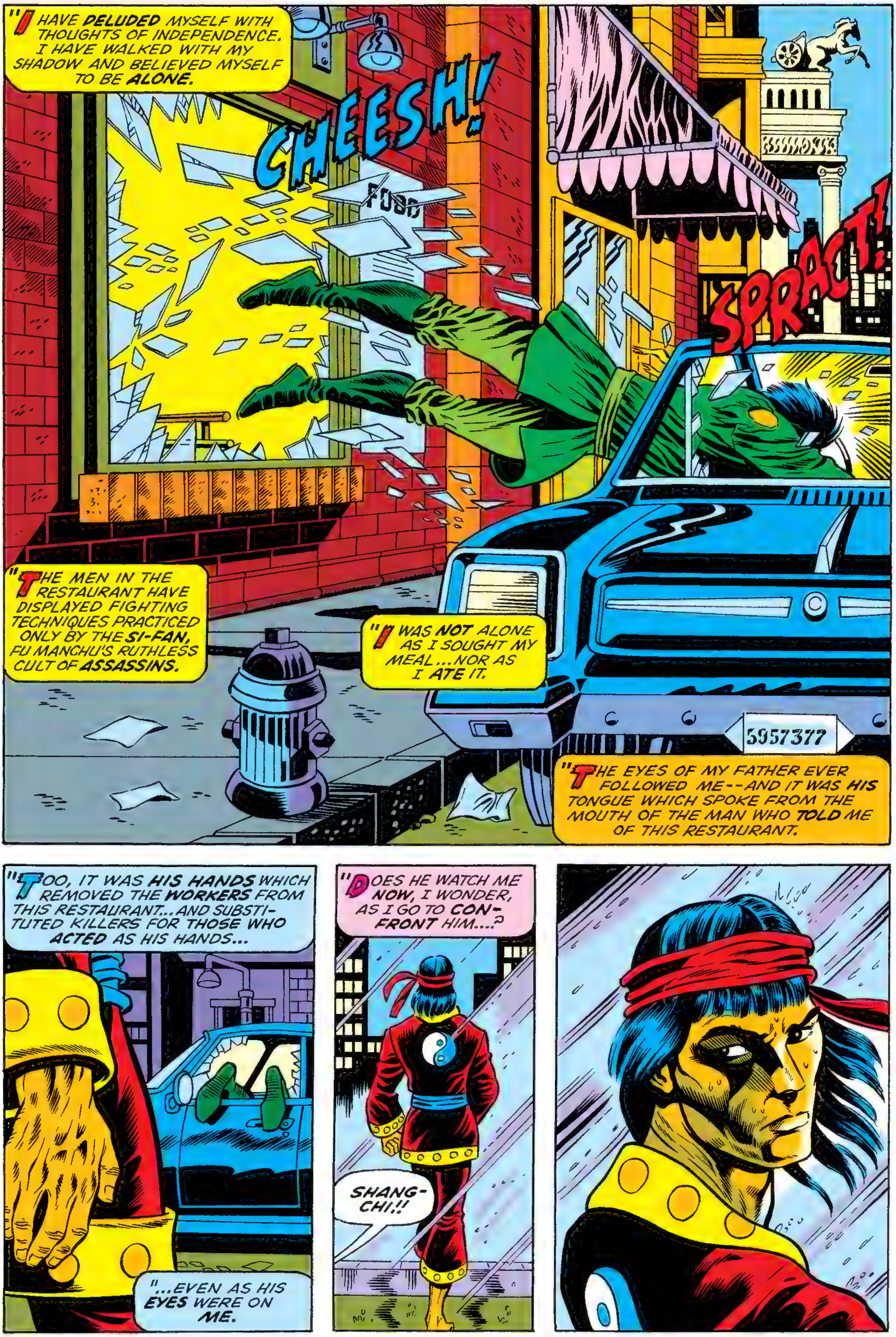

SHRAK
"I HURL MY BODY AWAY FROM THE SPLIT TABLE...
"...AND INTO THE STANCE OF--
"--DEFENSE.
"MY FOE HAS NO FURTHER USE FOR THE CONCEALMENT OF A ROBE.
"HIS INTENTIONS ARE AS NAKED AS A SKULL.
KRIK-IK-IK-IK-IK
LET'S GET OUTTA HERE, BABY!
I'VE ALREADY SEEN THIS FLICK!

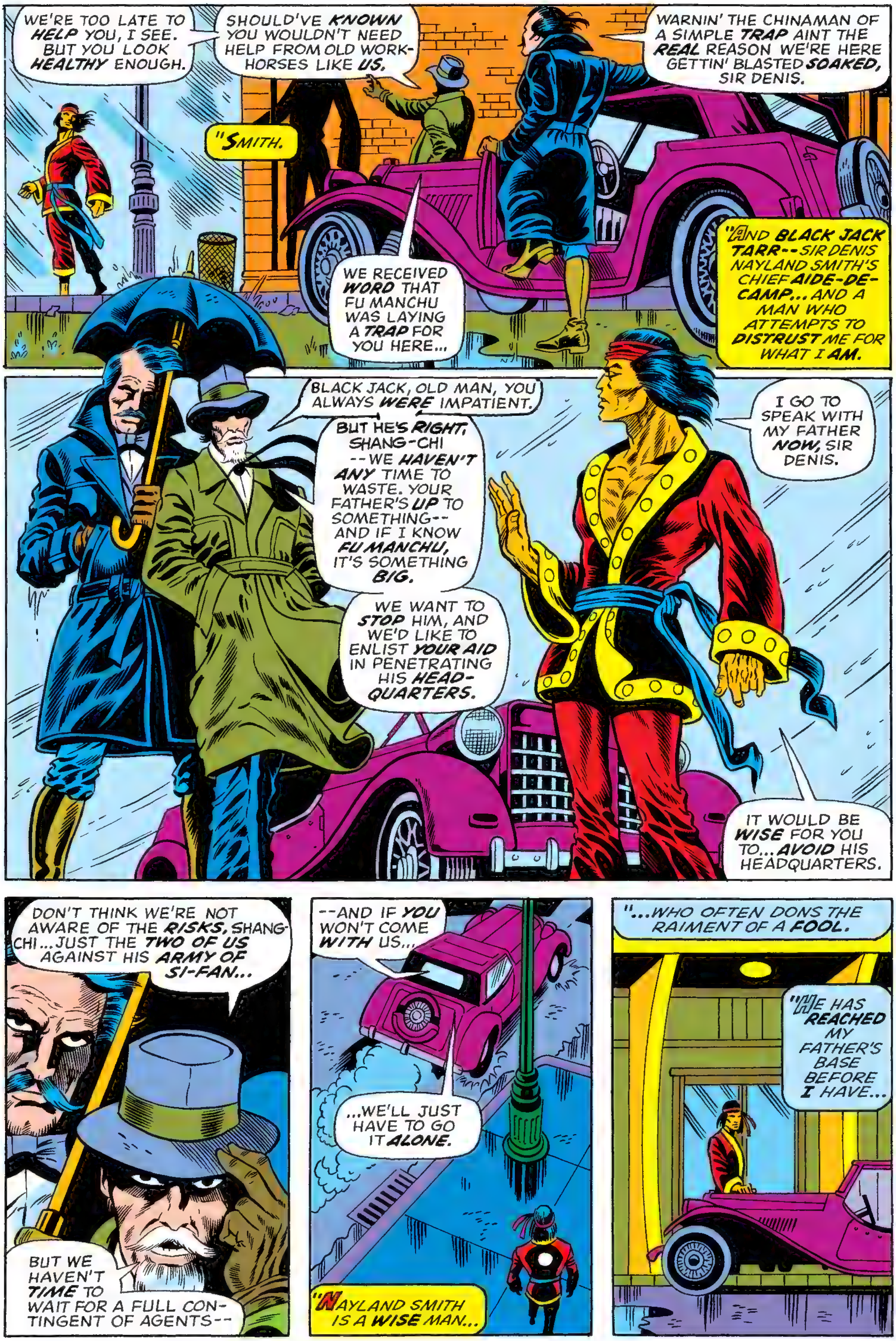

"MY KICK ANGERS HIM...
CHUT!
"...AS DOES THE FIST WHICH SURGES UPWARD AT THE CENTER OF HIS SLASH.
FWAK!
SHRESH!
"HE PAUSES NOW...
"...CAUTIOUS IN HIS ANGER.
"I USE HIS CAUTION--
"--TO GRASP A SPEAR FROM THE WALL.
"BUT THE WEAPON IS MERE DECORATION...
SWIK
"...MADE OF LITTLE MORE THAN PAPER.
SWSSSSSS
"AND I AM REMINDED--
CHANK
"--THAT THE STRONGEST WEAPON IS ONE'S BODY...
SHUP!
UNFF--!
"...EVEN AS IT IS THE MIND'S WEAKEST SHIELD.

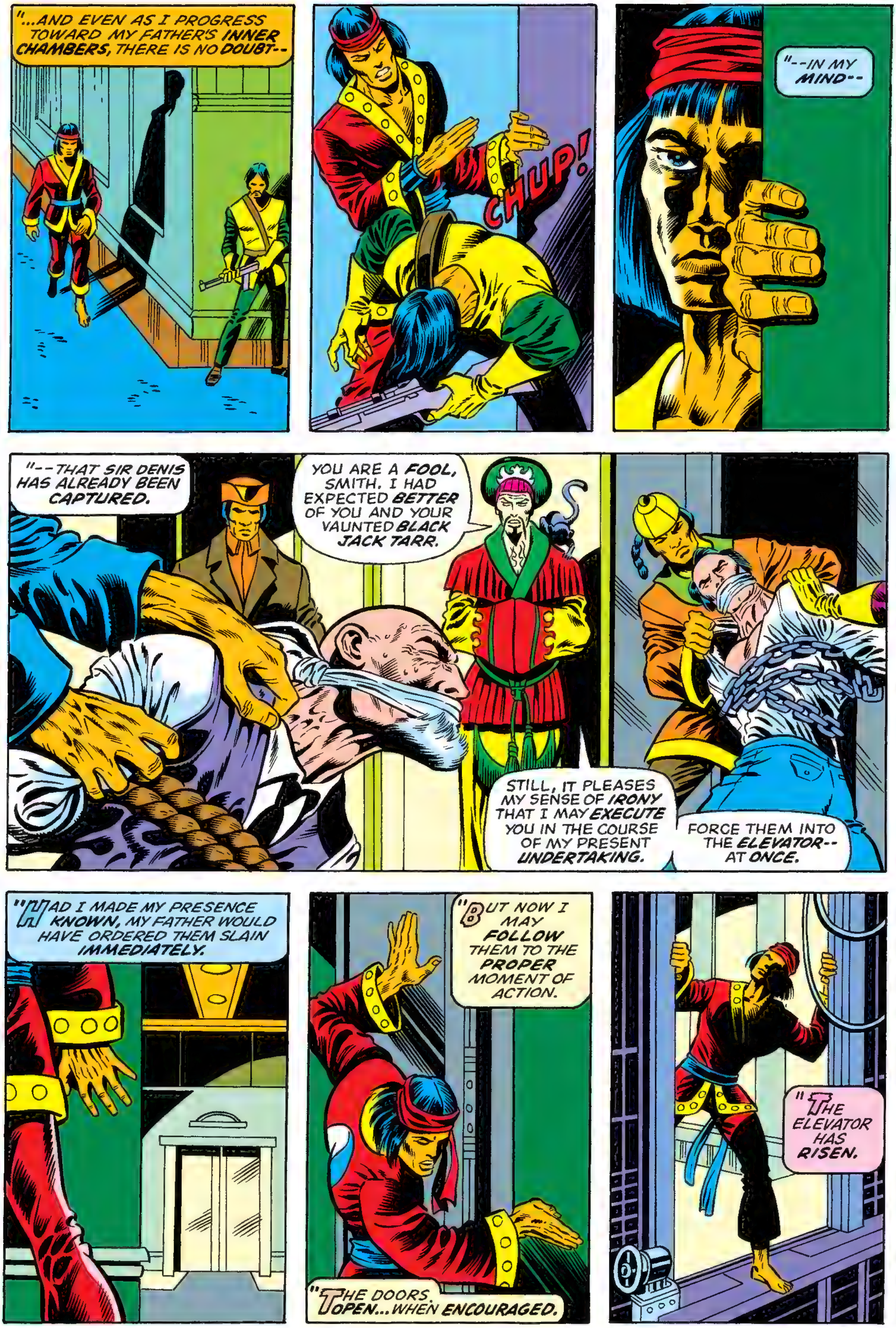

"KNIVES. USED FOR THE CARVING OF COOKED FLESH...
"...SHORTER THAN THE BLADE RESERVED FOR LIVING FLESH.
KUD!
HUK--!
SWANK
CHING!
"AND YET--
"--THEY ARE LONG ENOUGH.
FLANK!
"WITH THE PROPER TWIST OF MY WRISTS--
CHRASH
"--THE CROSSED BLADES REPEL MY FOE.
"AND NOW HE FEARS...
"...THAT THE CHANDELIER--
SPLOW!
"--WILL PROVE STRONG ENOUGH TO SUPPORT MY SWING.

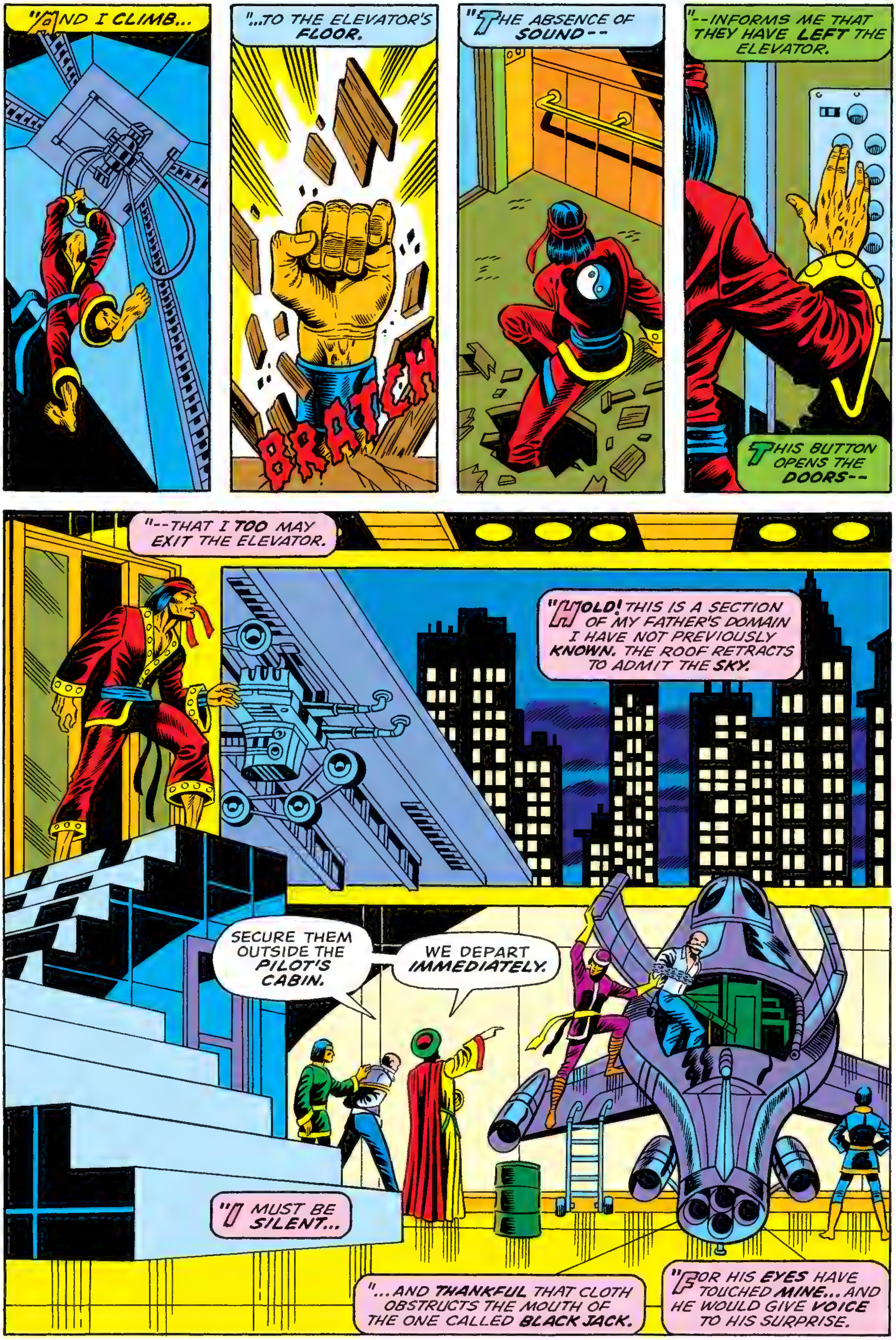

"HIS FEARS WERE WELL-FOUNDED.
"BUT--
AND NOW, DOG-SON OF FU MANCHU--
--PREPARE TO DIE!!
"MORE ASSASSINS... IN THE GUISE OF WAITERS.
"THEY WOULD ATTACK ME.
WOK!
SPUNT
"BUT I HAVE STOPPED THEM ALL...
SWOK!
FUP!
"...SAVE ONE.
I TRUST, SHANG-CHI, THAT YOU FOUND YOUR FINAL MEAL... PLEASANT?
"THE ONE WHO WAITED ON ME.

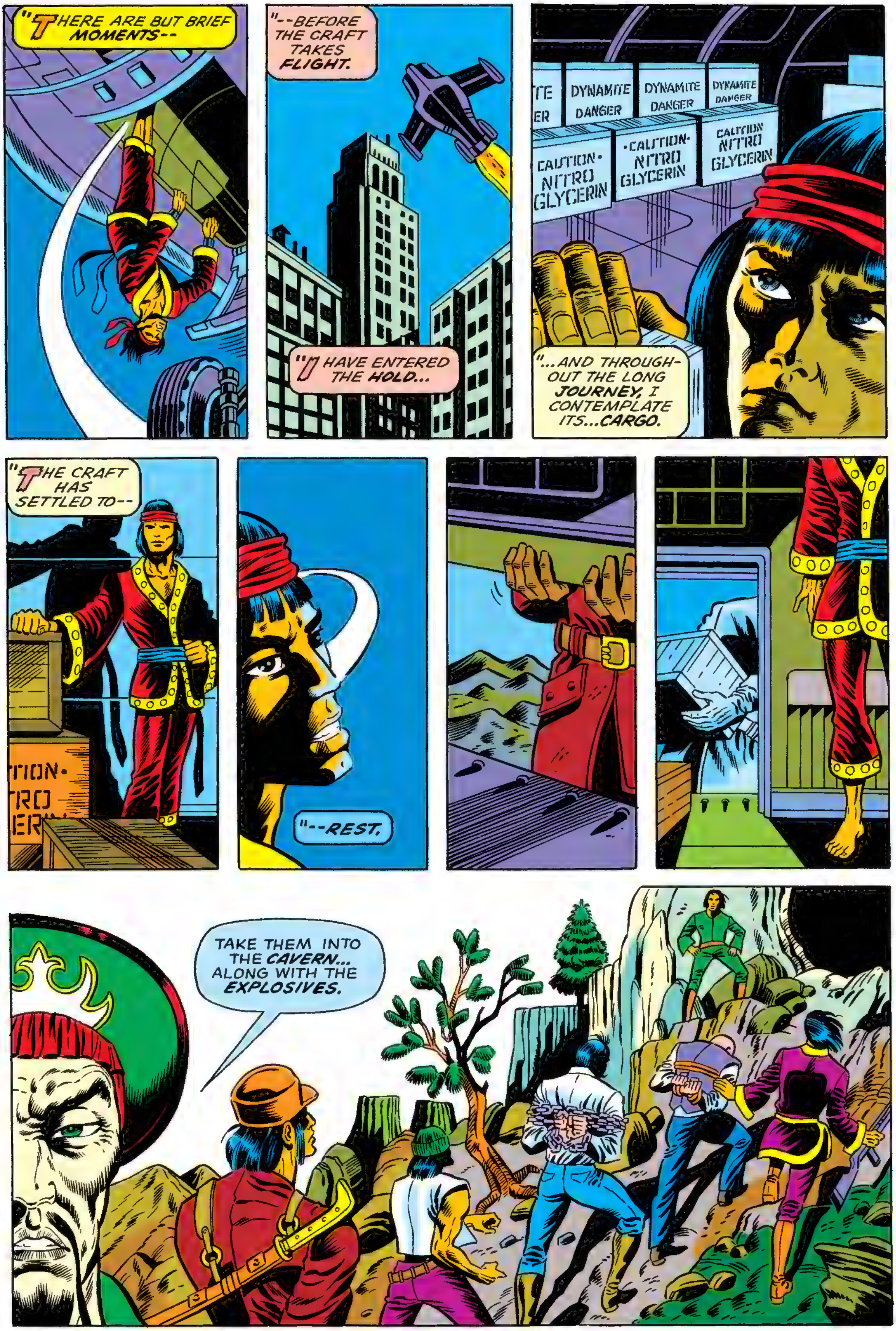

THE OTHERS WISHED TO SEASON YOUR MEAL WITH POISON...
BUT I PROTESTED, FAVORING A MORE PERSONAL EXECUTION.
"MY BLOW STRUCK HIM FULLY IN THE FACE... AND HE FELT NOTHING.
THAP!
"AND NOW MY SECOND THRUST IS DEFLECTED--
"--FROM THE PATH OF HIS THRUST.
WUK!
"AGAIN HE STRIKES...
SUFT!
"...WITH THE SUPREME SKILL OF A TRAINED MASTER...
"...AND THE OVER-ZEALOUS ABANDON OF A--
"--FOOL.
SPLANG!
NO--! NOOOO!!

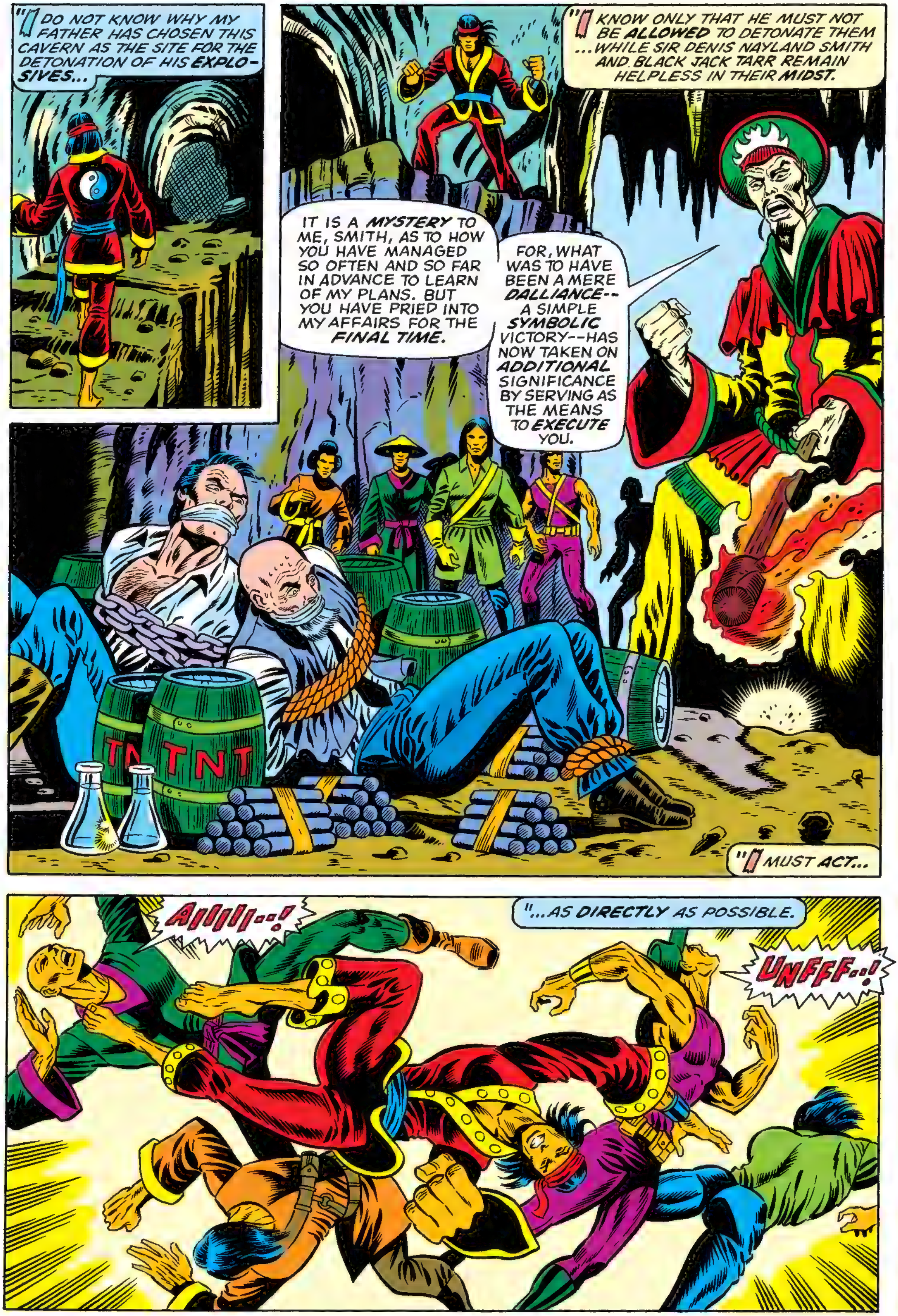

"I HAVE DELUDED MYSELF WITH THOUGHTS OF INDEPENDENCE. I HAVE WALKED WITH MY SHADOW AND BELIEVED MYSELF TO BE ALONE.
CHEESH!
FOOD
SPRACT!
"THE MEN IN THE RESTAURANT HAVE DISPLAYED FIGHTING TECHNIQUES PRACTICED ONLY BY THE SI-FAN, FU MANCHU'S RUTHLESS CULT OF ASSASSINS.
"I WAS NOT ALONE AS I SOUGHT MY MEAL ... NOR AS I ATE IT.
5957377
"THE EYES OF MY FATHER EVER FOLLOWED ME--AND IT WAS HIS TONGUE WHICH SPOKE FROM THE MOUTH OF THE MAN WHO TOLD ME OF THIS RESTAURANT.
"TOO, IT WAS HIS HANDS WHICH REMOVED THE WORKERS FROM THIS RESTAURANT... AND SUBSTITUTED KILLERS FOR THOSE WHO ACTED AS HIS HANDS...
"...EVEN AS HIS EYES WERE ON ME.
"DOES HE WATCH ME NOW, I WONDER, AS I GO TO CONFRONT HIM....?
SHANG-CHI!!

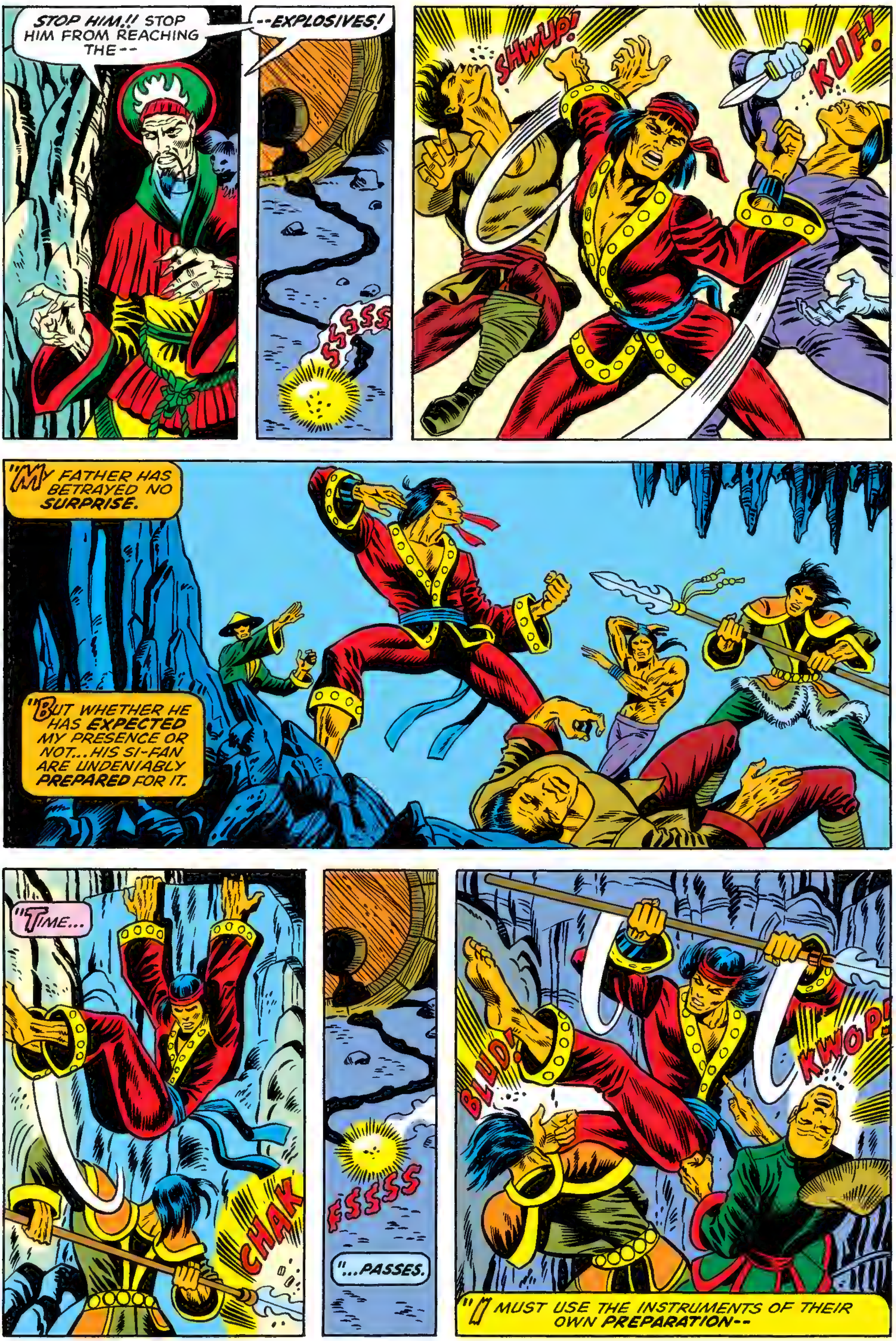

WE'RE TOO LATE TO **HELP** YOU, I SEE. BUT YOU LOOK **HEALTHY** ENOUGH.
SHOULD'VE **KNOWN** YOU WOULDN'T NEED HELP FROM OLD WORK-HORSES LIKE **US.**
WARNIN' THE CHINAMAN OF A SIMPLE **TRAP** AINT THE **REAL** REASON WE'RE HERE GETTIN' BLASTED **SOAKED,** SIR DENIS.
"SMITH.
WE RECEIVED **WORD** THAT FU MANCHU WAS LAYING A **TRAP** FOR YOU HERE...
"AND **BLACK JACK TARR**--SIR DENIS NAYLAND SMITH'S CHIEF **AIDE-DE-CAMP...** AND A MAN WHO ATTEMPTS TO **DISTRUST** ME FOR WHAT I **AM.**
BLACK JACK, OLD MAN, YOU ALWAYS **WERE** IMPATIENT.
BUT HE'S **RIGHT,** SHANG-CHI --WE **HAVEN'T ANY** TIME TO WASTE. YOUR FATHER'S **UP** TO SOMETHING-- AND IF I KNOW **FU MANCHU,** IT'S SOMETHING **BIG.**
WE WANT TO **STOP** HIM, AND WE'D LIKE TO ENLIST **YOUR AID** IN PENETRATING HIS **HEADQUARTERS.**
I GO TO SPEAK WITH MY FATHER **NOW,** SIR DENIS.
IT WOULD BE **WISE** FOR YOU TO... **AVOID** HIS HEADQUARTERS.
DON'T THINK WE'RE NOT AWARE OF THE **RISKS,** SHANG-CHI... JUST THE **TWO OF US** AGAINST HIS **ARMY OF SI-FAN...**
BUT WE HAVEN'T **TIME** TO WAIT FOR A FULL CONTINGENT OF AGENTS--
--AND IF **YOU** WON'T COME **WITH** US...
...WE'LL JUST HAVE TO GO IT **ALONE.**
"NAYLAND SMITH IS A **WISE** MAN...
"...WHO OFTEN DONS THE RAIMENT OF A **FOOL.**
"HE HAS **REACHED** MY FATHER'S BASE BEFORE **I** HAVE...

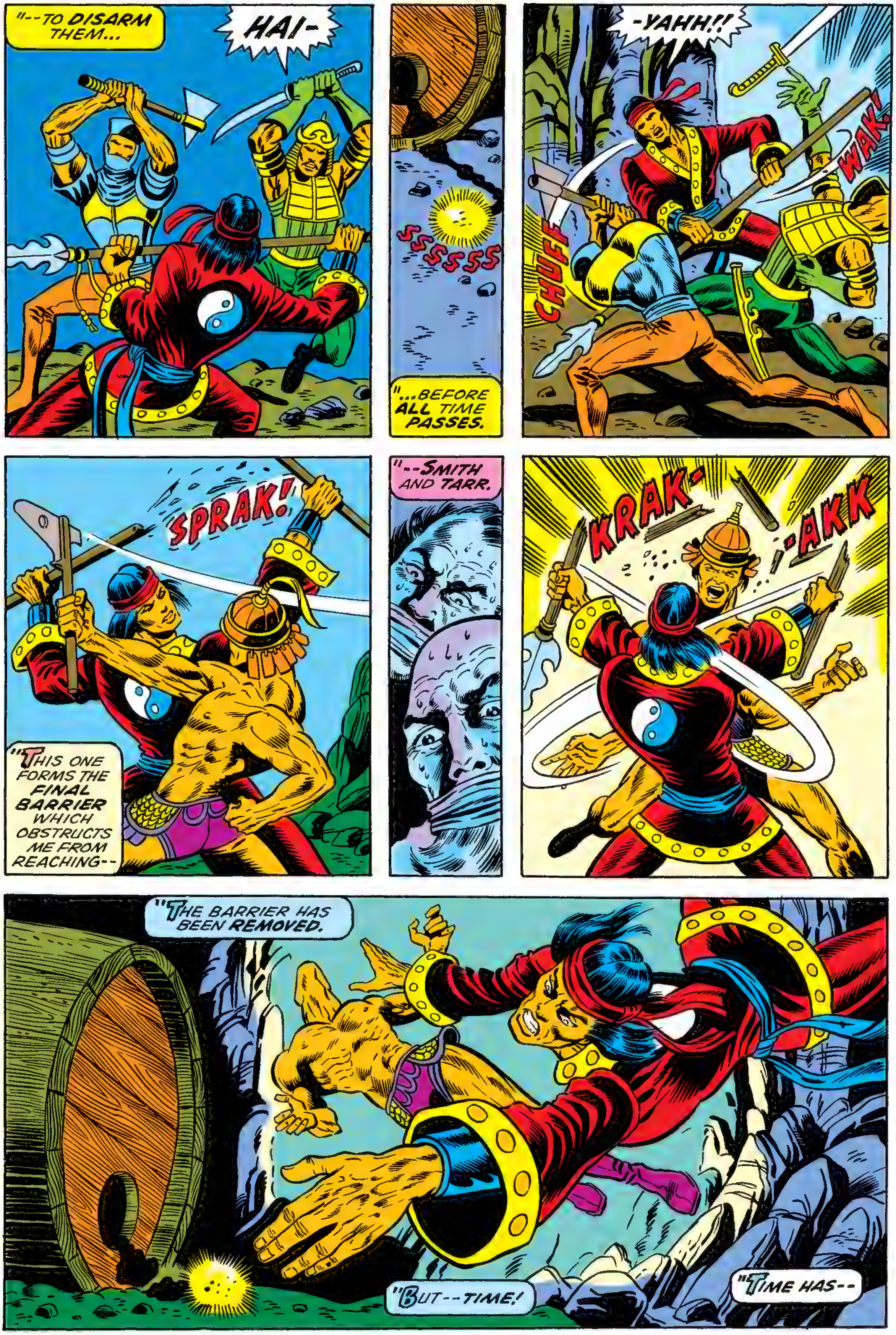

"...AND EVEN AS I PROGRESS TOWARD MY FATHER'S INNER CHAMBERS, THERE IS NO DOUBT--
CHUP!
"--IN MY MIND--
"--THAT SIR DENIS HAS ALREADY BEEN CAPTURED.
YOU ARE A FOOL, SMITH. I HAD EXPECTED BETTER OF YOU AND YOUR VAUNTED BLACK JACK TARR.
STILL, IT PLEASES MY SENSE OF IRONY THAT I MAY EXECUTE YOU IN THE COURSE OF MY PRESENT UNDERTAKING.
FORCE THEM INTO THE ELEVATOR-- AT ONCE.
"HAD I MADE MY PRESENCE KNOWN, MY FATHER WOULD HAVE ORDERED THEM SLAIN IMMEDIATELY.
"BUT NOW I MAY FOLLOW THEM TO THE PROPER MOMENT OF ACTION.
"THE DOORS OPEN...WHEN ENCOURAGED.
"THE ELEVATOR HAS RISEN.

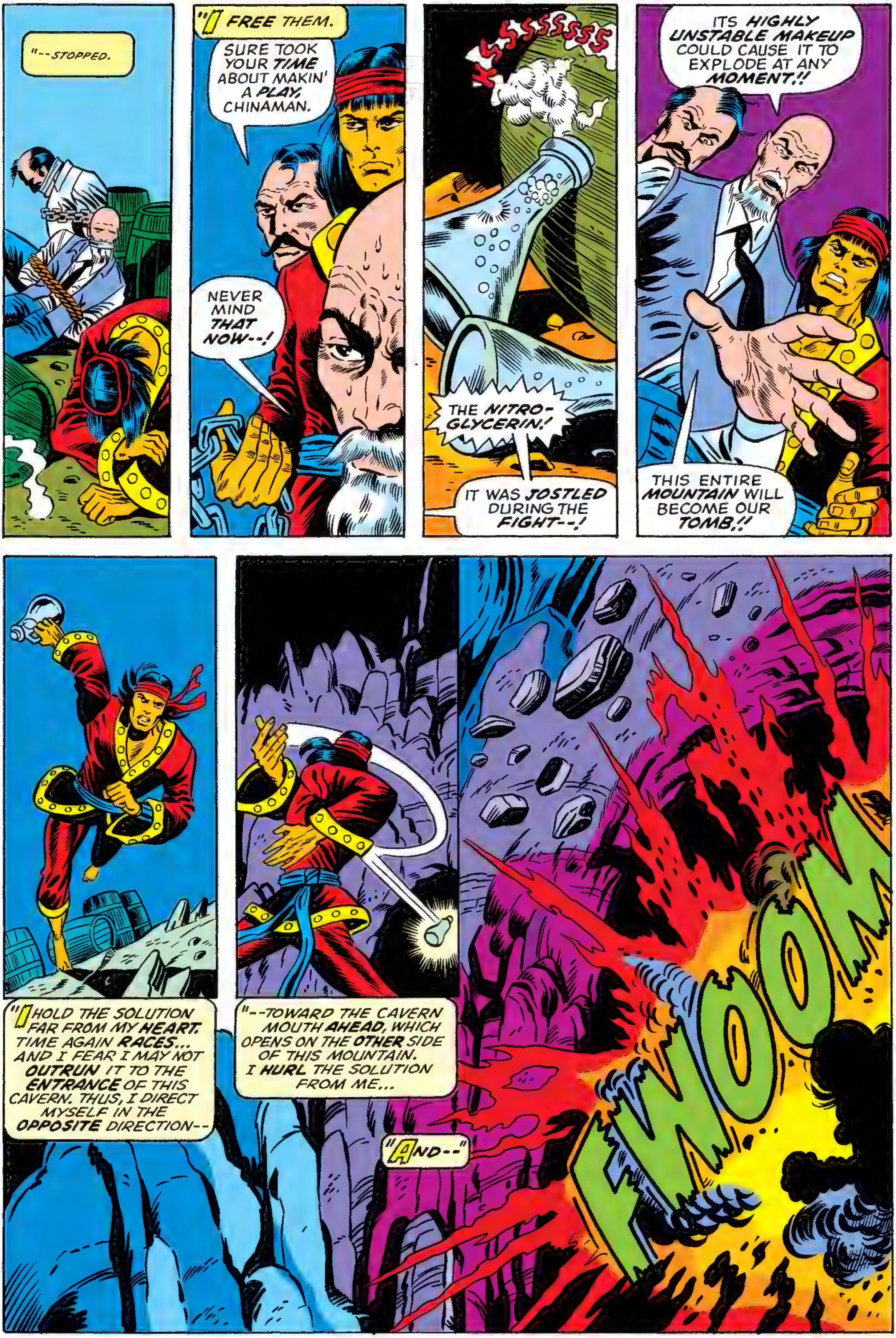

"AND I CLIMB...
"...TO THE ELEVATOR'S FLOOR.
BRATCH
"THE ABSENCE OF SOUND--
"--INFORMS ME THAT THEY HAVE LEFT THE ELEVATOR.
THIS BUTTON OPENS THE DOORS--
"--THAT I TOO MAY EXIT THE ELEVATOR.
"HOLD! THIS IS A SECTION OF MY FATHER'S DOMAIN I HAVE NOT PREVIOUSLY KNOWN. THE ROOF RETRACTS TO ADMIT THE SKY.
SECURE THEM OUTSIDE THE PILOT'S CABIN.
WE DEPART IMMEDIATELY.
"I MUST BE SILENT...
"...AND THANKFUL THAT CLOTH OBSTRUCTS THE MOUTH OF THE ONE CALLED BLACK JACK.
"FOR HIS EYES HAVE TOUCHED MINE... AND HE WOULD GIVE VOICE TO HIS SURPRISE.

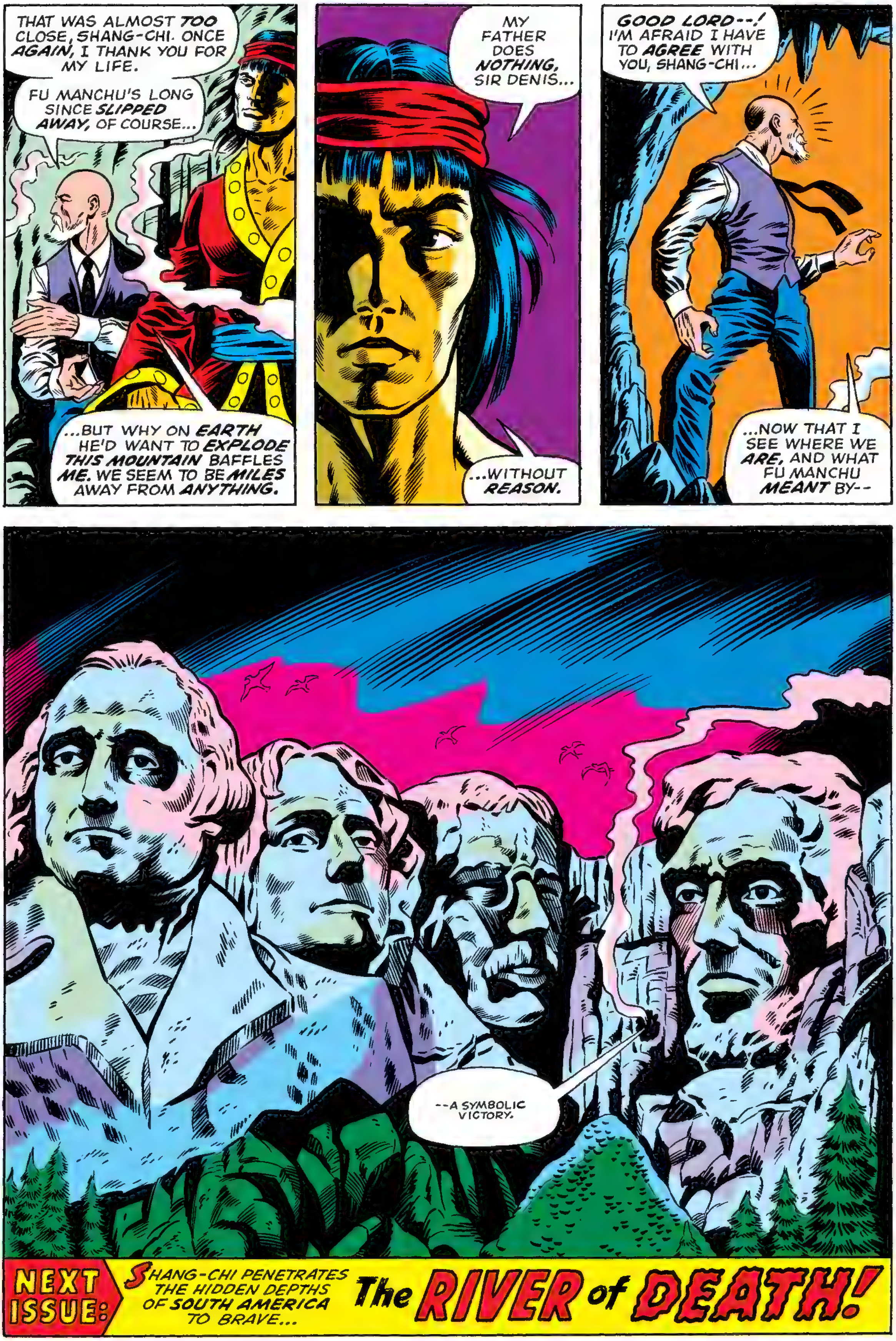

"THERE ARE BUT BRIEF MOMENTS--
"--BEFORE THE CRAFT TAKES FLIGHT.
"I HAVE ENTERED THE HOLD...
TE ER
DYNAMITE DANGER
DYNAMITE DANGER
DYNAMITE DANGER
CAUTION• NITRO GLYCERIN
•CAUTION• NITRO GLYCERIN
CAUTION NITRO GLYCERIN
"...AND THROUGHOUT THE LONG JOURNEY, I CONTEMPLATE ITS...CARGO.
"THE CRAFT HAS SETTLED TO--
TION• TRO ER
"--REST.
TAKE THEM INTO THE CAVERN... ALONG WITH THE EXPLOSIVES.

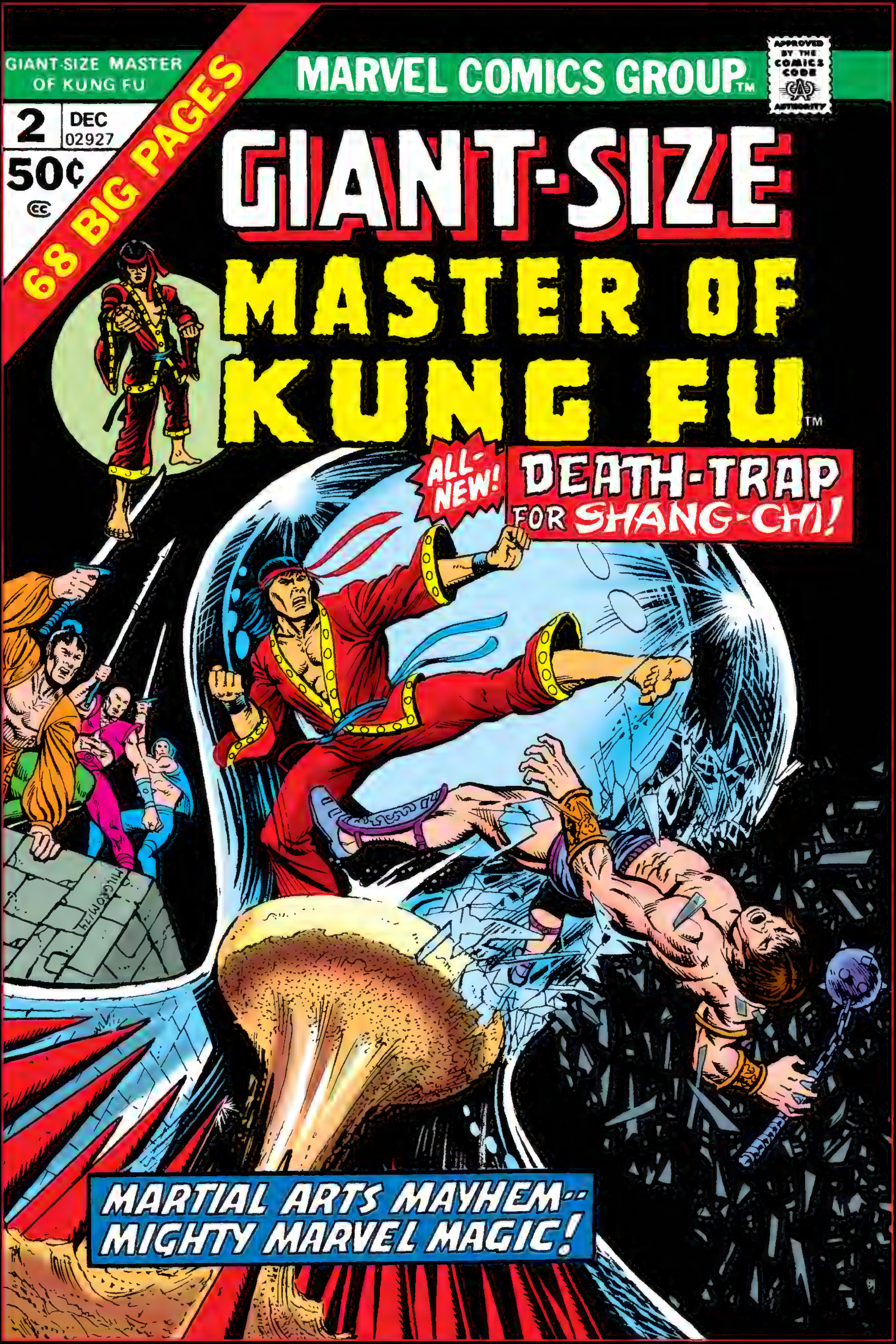

"I DO NOT KNOW WHY MY FATHER HAS CHOSEN THIS CAVERN AS THE SITE FOR THE DETONATION OF HIS **EXPLOSIVES**...
"I KNOW ONLY THAT HE MUST NOT BE **ALLOWED** TO DETONATE THEM ...WHILE SIR DENIS NAYLAND SMITH AND BLACK JACK TARR REMAIN HELPLESS IN THEIR **MIDST**.
IT IS A **MYSTERY** TO ME, SMITH, AS TO HOW YOU HAVE MANAGED SO OFTEN AND SO FAR IN ADVANCE TO LEARN OF MY PLANS. BUT YOU HAVE PRIED INTO MY AFFAIRS FOR THE **FINAL TIME**.
FOR, WHAT WAS TO HAVE BEEN A MERE **DALLIANCE**-- A SIMPLE **SYMBOLIC** VICTORY--HAS NOW TAKEN ON **ADDITIONAL** SIGNIFICANCE BY SERVING AS THE MEANS TO **EXECUTE** YOU.
TNT
TNT
"I MUST **ACT**...
AIIII--!
"...AS **DIRECTLY** AS POSSIBLE.
UNFFF--!


STOP HIM!! STOP HIM FROM REACHING THE--
--EXPLOSIVES!
SSSSS
SHWUP!
KUF!
"MY FATHER HAS BETRAYED NO SURPRISE.
"BUT WHETHER HE HAS EXPECTED MY PRESENCE OR NOT...HIS SI-FAN ARE UNDENIABLY PREPARED FOR IT.
"TIME...
CHAK
FSSSSS
"...PASSES.
BLUD!
KWOP!
"I MUST USE THE INSTRUMENTS OF THEIR OWN PREPARATION--


"--TO DISARM THEM...
HAI-
SSSSSS
"...BEFORE ALL TIME PASSES.
-YAHH!!
CHUFF
WAK!
SPRAK!
"THIS ONE FORMS THE FINAL BARRIER WHICH OBSTRUCTS ME FROM REACHING--
"--SMITH AND TARR.
KRAK-
-AKK
"THE BARRIER HAS BEEN REMOVED.
"BUT--TIME!
"TIME HAS--


"--STOPPED.
"I FREE THEM.
SURE TOOK YOUR TIME ABOUT MAKIN' A PLAY, CHINAMAN.
NEVER MIND THAT NOW--!
KSSSSSSSSS
THE NITRO-GLYCERIN!
IT WAS JOSTLED DURING THE FIGHT--!
ITS HIGHLY UNSTABLE MAKEUP COULD CAUSE IT TO EXPLODE AT ANY MOMENT!!
THIS ENTIRE MOUNTAIN WILL BECOME OUR TOMB!!
"I HOLD THE SOLUTION FAR FROM MY HEART. TIME AGAIN RACES... AND I FEAR I MAY NOT OUTRUN IT TO THE ENTRANCE OF THIS CAVERN. THUS, I DIRECT MYSELF IN THE OPPOSITE DIRECTION--
"--TOWARD THE CAVERN MOUTH AHEAD, WHICH OPENS ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THIS MOUNTAIN. I HURL THE SOLUTION FROM ME...
"AND--"
FWOOM


THAT WAS ALMOST *TOO* CLOSE, SHANG-CHI. ONCE *AGAIN,* I THANK YOU FOR MY LIFE.
FU MANCHU'S LONG SINCE *SLIPPED AWAY,* OF COURSE...
...BUT WHY ON *EARTH* HE'D WANT TO *EXPLODE THIS MOUNTAIN* BAFFLES *ME.* WE SEEM TO BE *MILES* AWAY FROM *ANYTHING.*
MY FATHER DOES *NOTHING,* SIR DENIS...
...WITHOUT *REASON.*
GOOD LORD--! I'M AFRAID I HAVE TO *AGREE* WITH YOU, SHANG-CHI...
...NOW THAT I SEE WHERE WE *ARE,* AND WHAT FU MANCHU *MEANT* BY--
--A SYMBOLIC VICTORY.
NEXT ISSUE:
SHANG-CHI PENETRATES THE HIDDEN DEPTHS OF SOUTH AMERICA TO BRAVE...
The RIVER of DEATH!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ALL-NEW!
DEATH-TRAP FOR SHANG-CHI!
MARTIAL ARTS MAYHEM-- MIGHTY MARVEL MAGIC!

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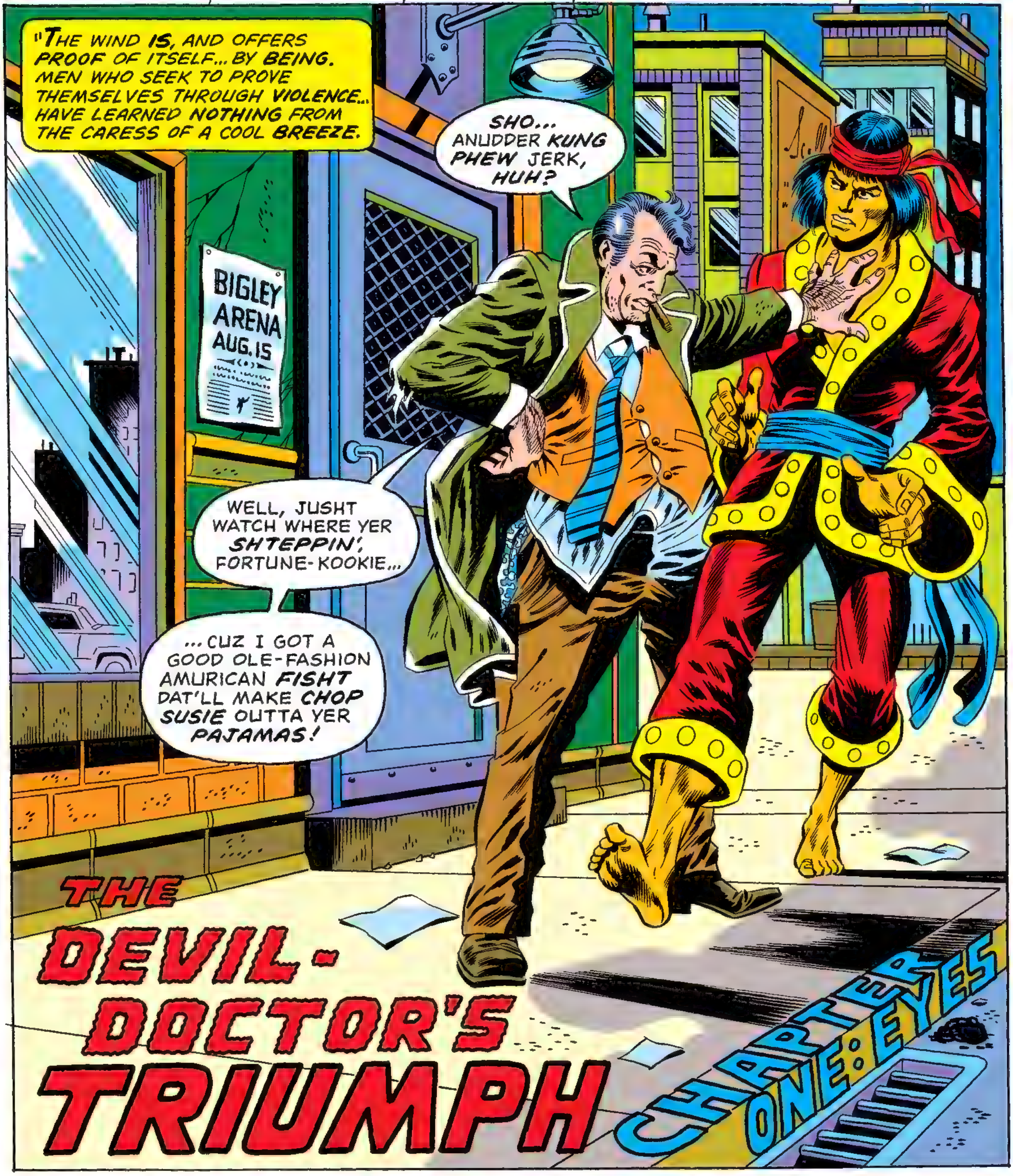
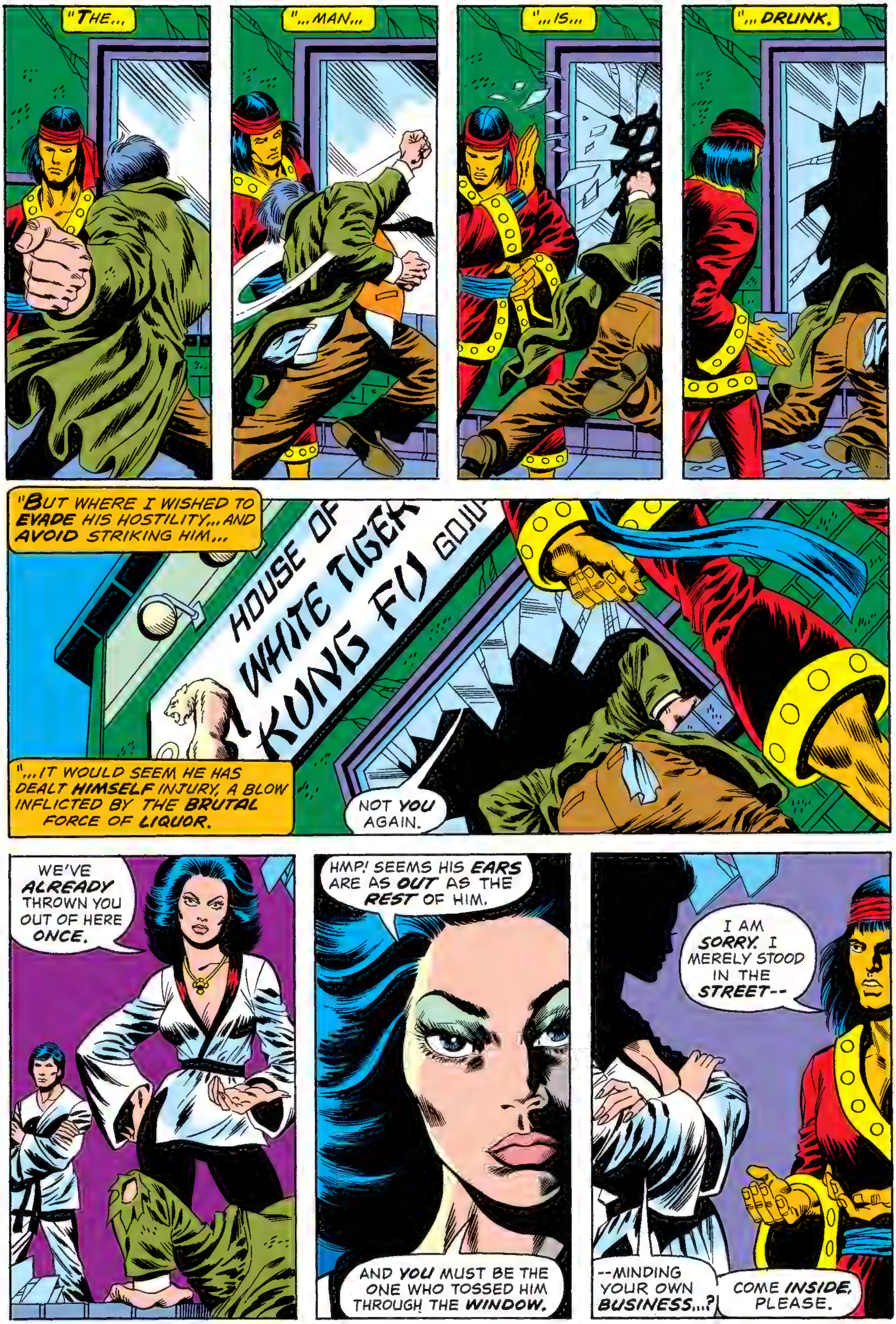
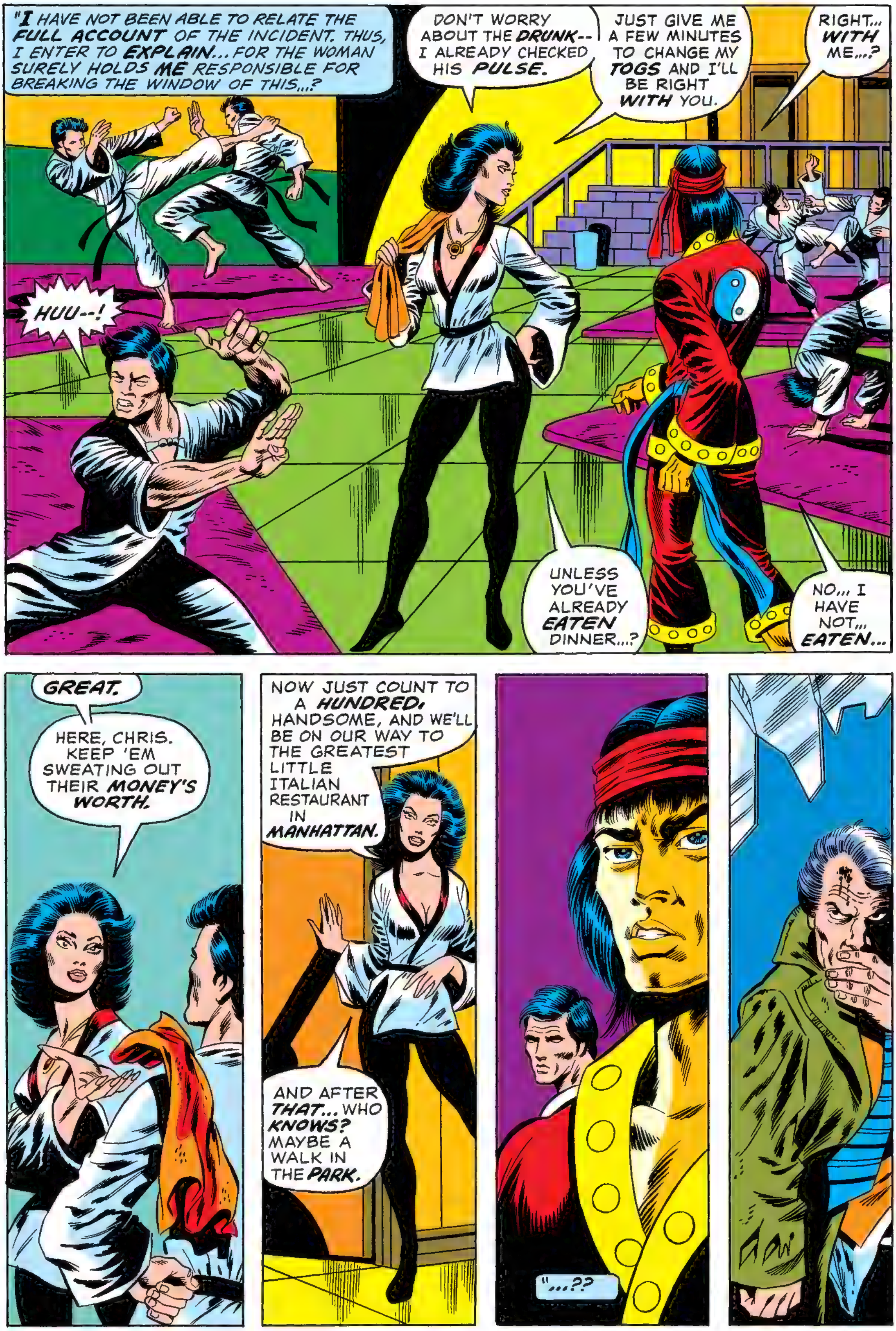
DOUG MOENCH STORY | PAUL GULACY ART | JACK ABEL INKS | JEAN SIMEK LETTERING P. GOLDBERG COLORING | ROY THOMAS EDITOR

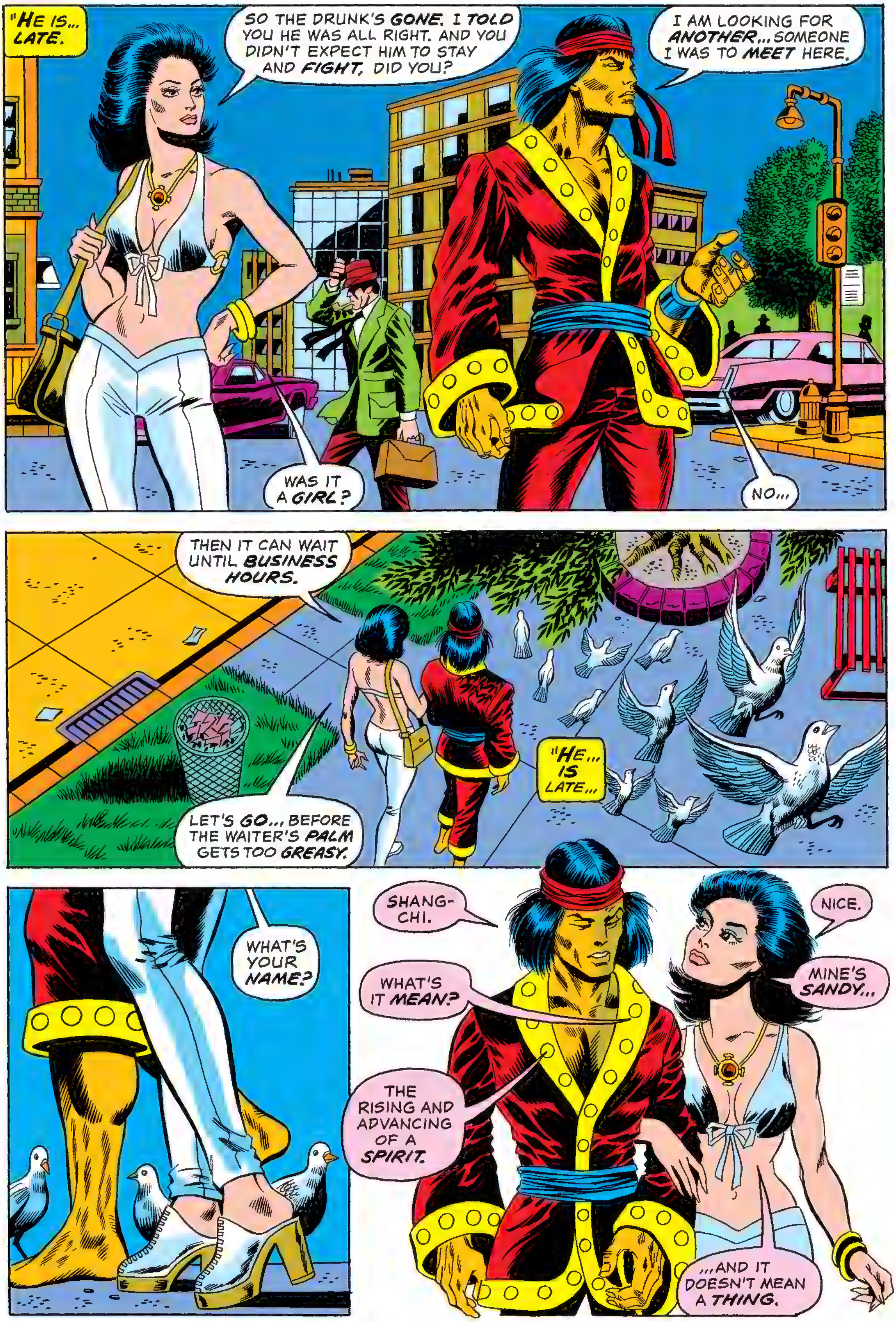

"THE WIND *IS*, AND OFFERS PROOF OF ITSELF... BY *BEING*. MEN WHO SEEK TO PROVE THEMSELVES THROUGH *VIOLENCE*... HAVE LEARNED *NOTHING* FROM THE CARESS OF A COOL *BREEZE*.
SHO... ANUDDER *KUNG PHEW* JERK, *HUH?*
BIGLEY ARENA AUG. 15
WELL, JUSHT WATCH WHERE YER *SHTEPPIN'*, FORTUNE-KOOKIE...
...CUZ I GOT A GOOD OLE-FASHION AMURICAN *FISHT* DAT'LL MAKE *CHOP SUSIE* OUTTA YER *PAJAMAS!*

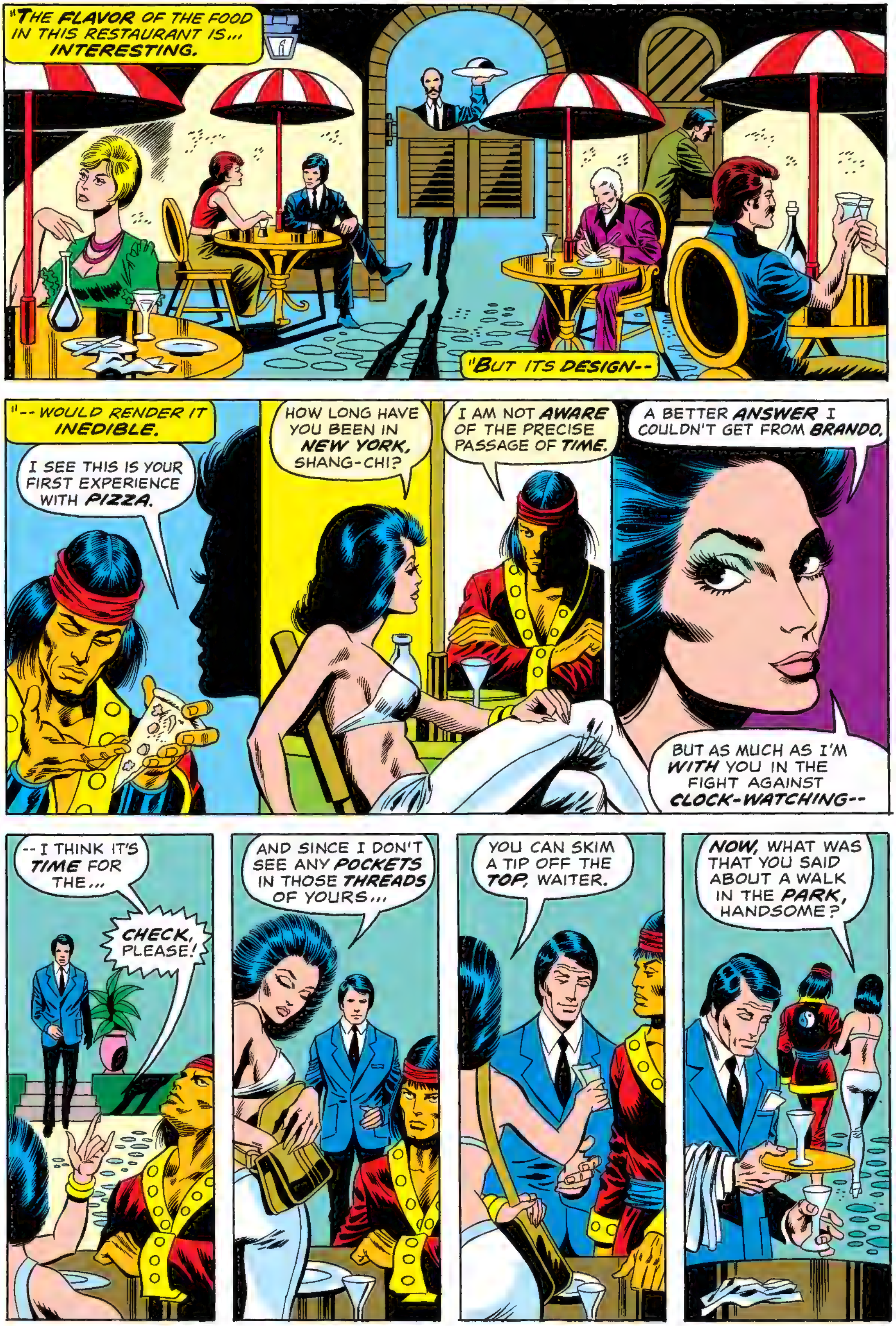
THE DEVIL-DOCTOR'S TRIUMPH

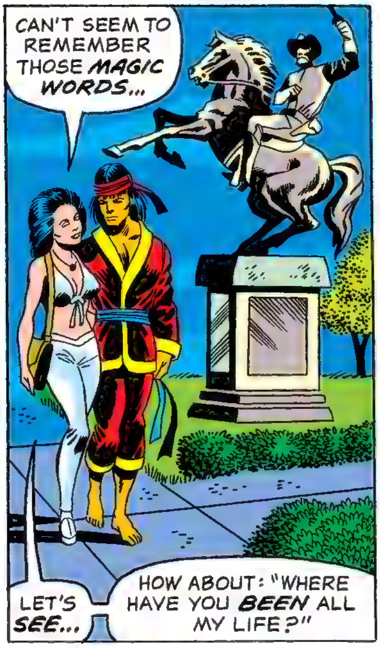
CHAPTER ONE: EYES

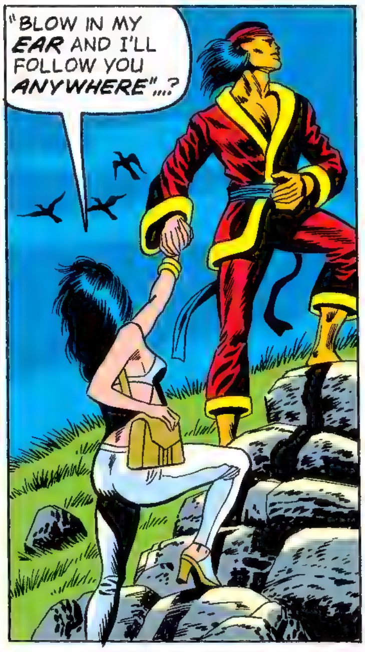

"THE...
"...MAN...
"...IS...
"...DRUNK.
"BUT WHERE I WISHED TO EVADE HIS HOSTILITY... AND AVOID STRIKING HIM...
HOUSE OF WHITE TIGER KUNG FU GOJU
"...IT WOULD SEEM HE HAS DEALT HIMSELF INJURY, A BLOW INFLICTED BY THE BRUTAL FORCE OF LIQUOR.
NOT YOU AGAIN.
WE'VE ALREADY THROWN YOU OUT OF HERE ONCE.
HMP! SEEMS HIS EARS ARE AS OUT AS THE REST OF HIM.
AND YOU MUST BE THE ONE WHO TOSSED HIM THROUGH THE WINDOW.
I AM SORRY. I MERELY STOOD IN THE STREET--
--MINDING YOUR OWN BUSINESS...?
COME INSIDE, PLEASE.

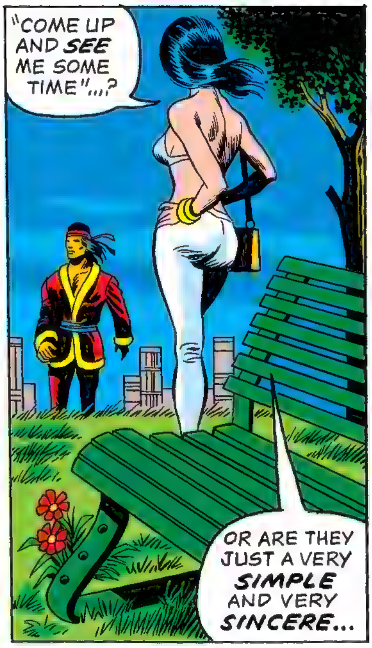

"I HAVE NOT BEEN ABLE TO RELATE THE FULL ACCOUNT OF THE INCIDENT. THUS, I ENTER TO EXPLAIN... FOR THE WOMAN SURELY HOLDS ME RESPONSIBLE FOR BREAKING THE WINDOW OF THIS...?
DON'T WORRY ABOUT THE DRUNK-- I ALREADY CHECKED HIS PULSE.
JUST GIVE ME A FEW MINUTES TO CHANGE MY TOGS AND I'LL BE RIGHT WITH YOU.
RIGHT... WITH ME...?
HUU--!
UNLESS YOU'VE ALREADY EATEN DINNER...?
NO... I HAVE NOT... EATEN...
GREAT.
HERE, CHRIS. KEEP 'EM SWEATING OUT THEIR MONEY'S WORTH.
NOW JUST COUNT TO A HUNDRED, HANDSOME, AND WE'LL BE ON OUR WAY TO THE GREATEST LITTLE ITALIAN RESTAURANT IN MANHATTAN.
AND AFTER THAT... WHO KNOWS? MAYBE A WALK IN THE PARK.
"...??

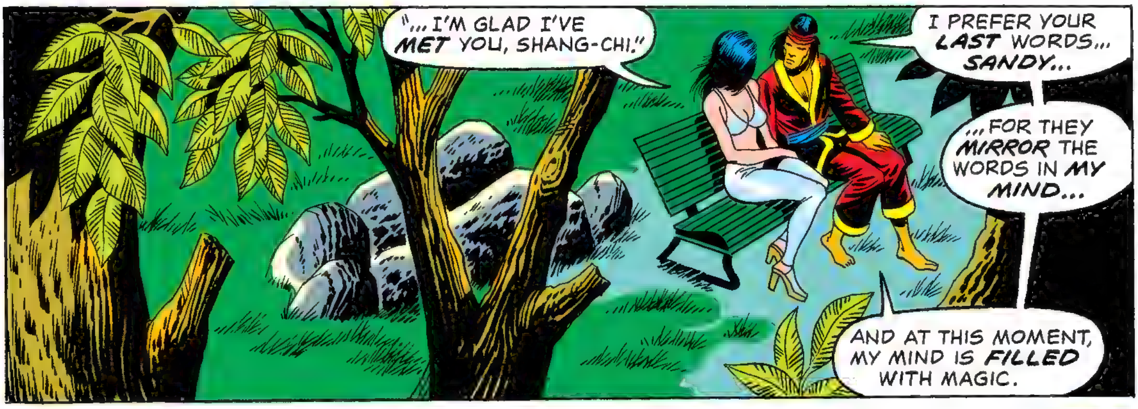

"HE IS... LATE.
SO THE DRUNK'S GONE. I TOLD YOU HE WAS ALL RIGHT. AND YOU DIDN'T EXPECT HIM TO STAY AND FIGHT, DID YOU?
I AM LOOKING FOR ANOTHER... SOMEONE I WAS TO MEET HERE.
WAS IT A GIRL?
NO...
THEN IT CAN WAIT UNTIL BUSINESS HOURS.
LET'S GO... BEFORE THE WAITER'S PALM GETS TOO GREASY.
"HE... IS LATE...
WHAT'S YOUR NAME?
SHANG-CHI.
NICE.
WHAT'S IT MEAN?
MINE'S SANDY...
THE RISING AND ADVANCING OF A SPIRIT.
...AND IT DOESN'T MEAN A THING.

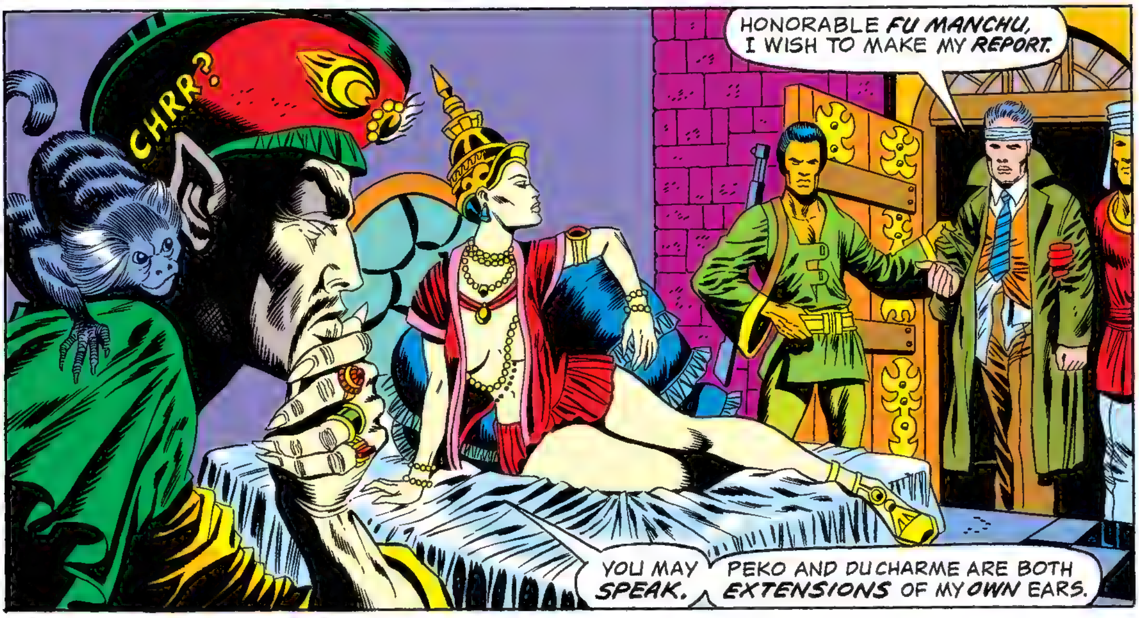

"THE FLAVOR OF THE FOOD IN THIS RESTAURANT IS... INTERESTING.
"BUT ITS DESIGN--
"--WOULD RENDER IT INEDIBLE.
I SEE THIS IS YOUR FIRST EXPERIENCE WITH PIZZA.
HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN IN NEW YORK, SHANG-CHI?
I AM NOT AWARE OF THE PRECISE PASSAGE OF TIME.
A BETTER ANSWER I COULDN'T GET FROM BRANDO.
BUT AS MUCH AS I'M WITH YOU IN THE FIGHT AGAINST CLOCK-WATCHING--
--I THINK IT'S TIME FOR THE...
CHECK, PLEASE!
AND SINCE I DON'T SEE ANY POCKETS IN THOSE THREADS OF YOURS...
YOU CAN SKIM A TIP OFF THE TOP, WAITER.
NOW, WHAT WAS THAT YOU SAID ABOUT A WALK IN THE PARK, HANDSOME?

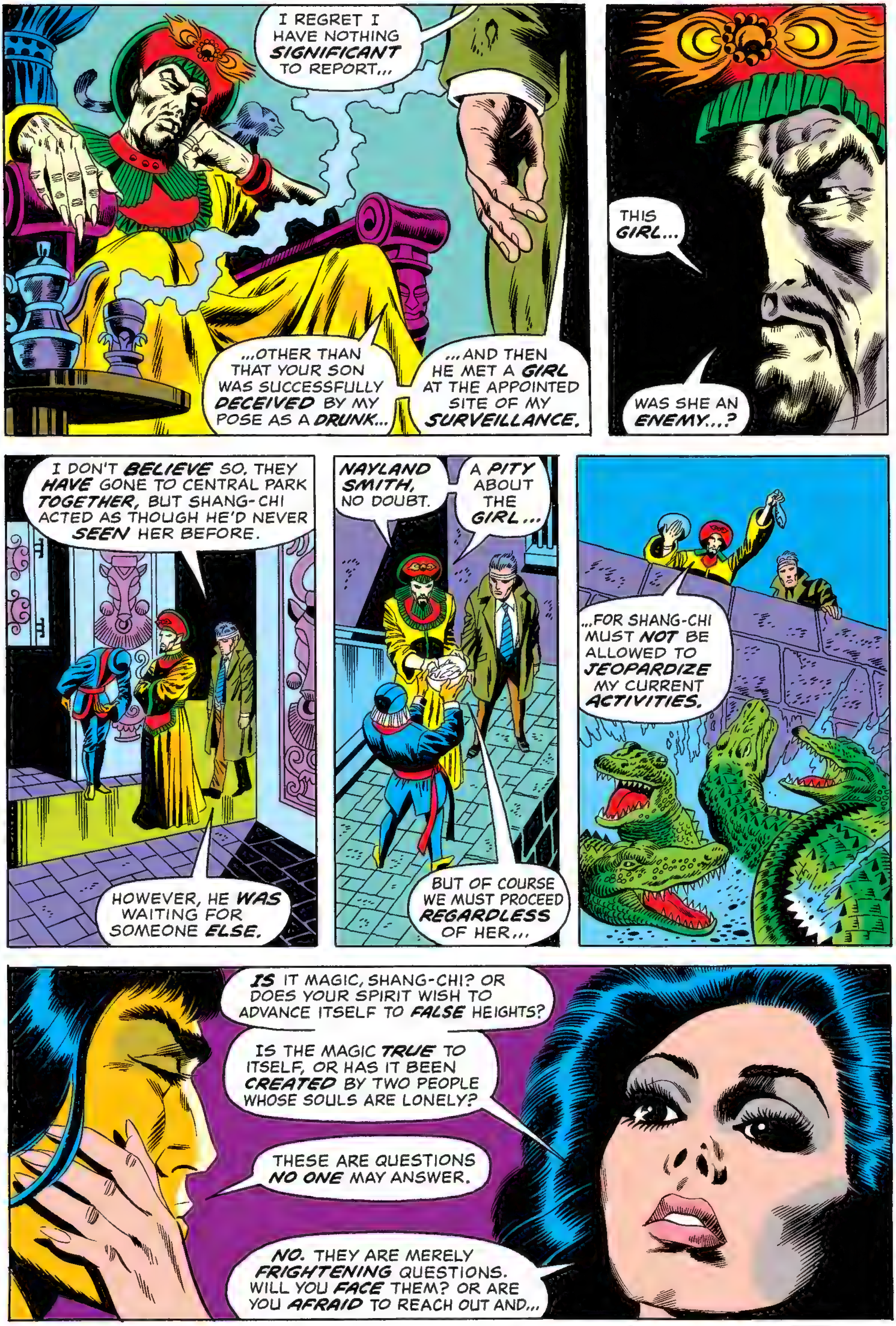

CAN'T SEEM TO REMEMBER THOSE *MAGIC WORDS*...
LET'S *SEE*...
HOW ABOUT: "WHERE HAVE YOU *BEEN* ALL MY LIFE?"

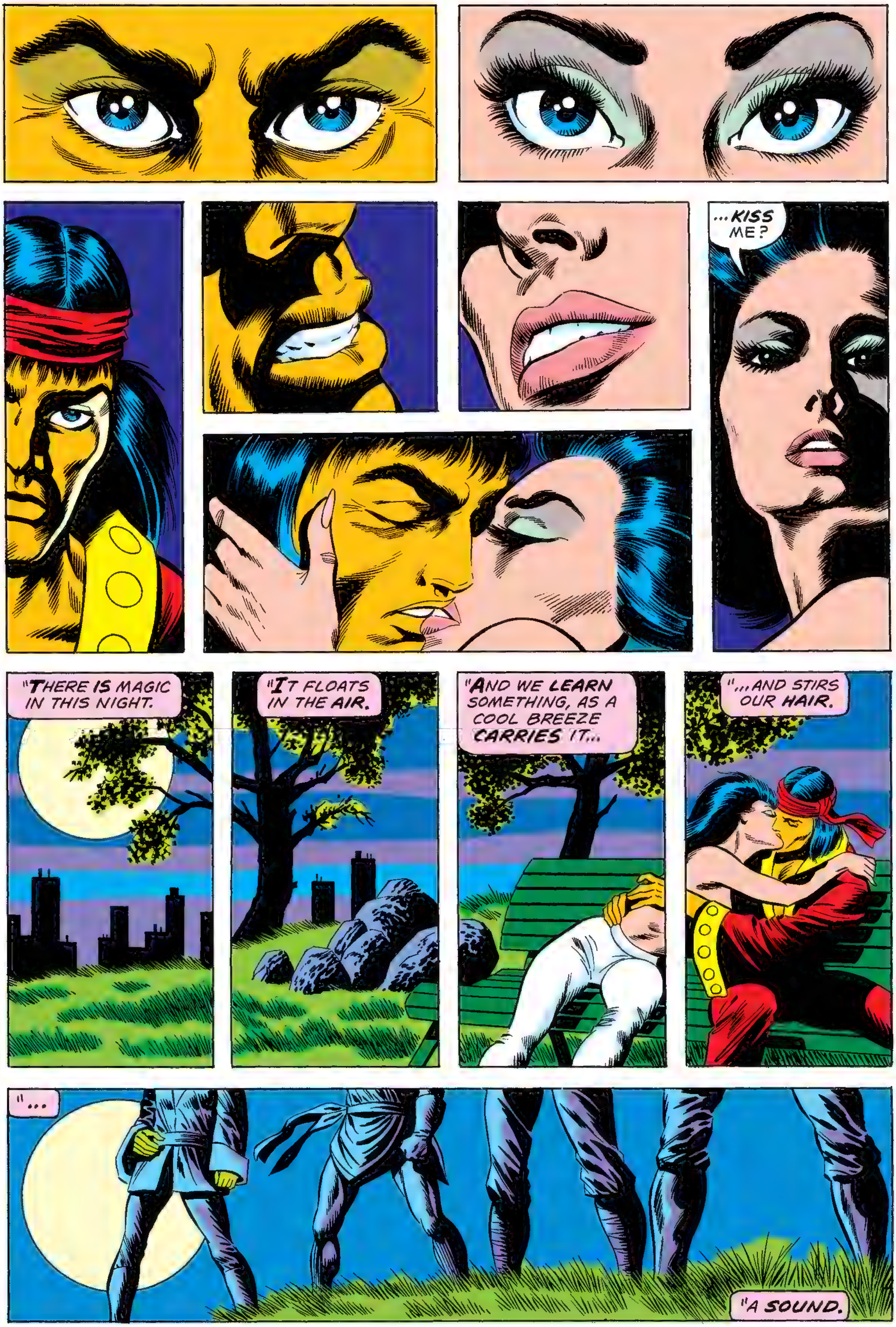

"BLOW IN MY *EAR* AND I'LL FOLLOW YOU *ANYWHERE*"...?

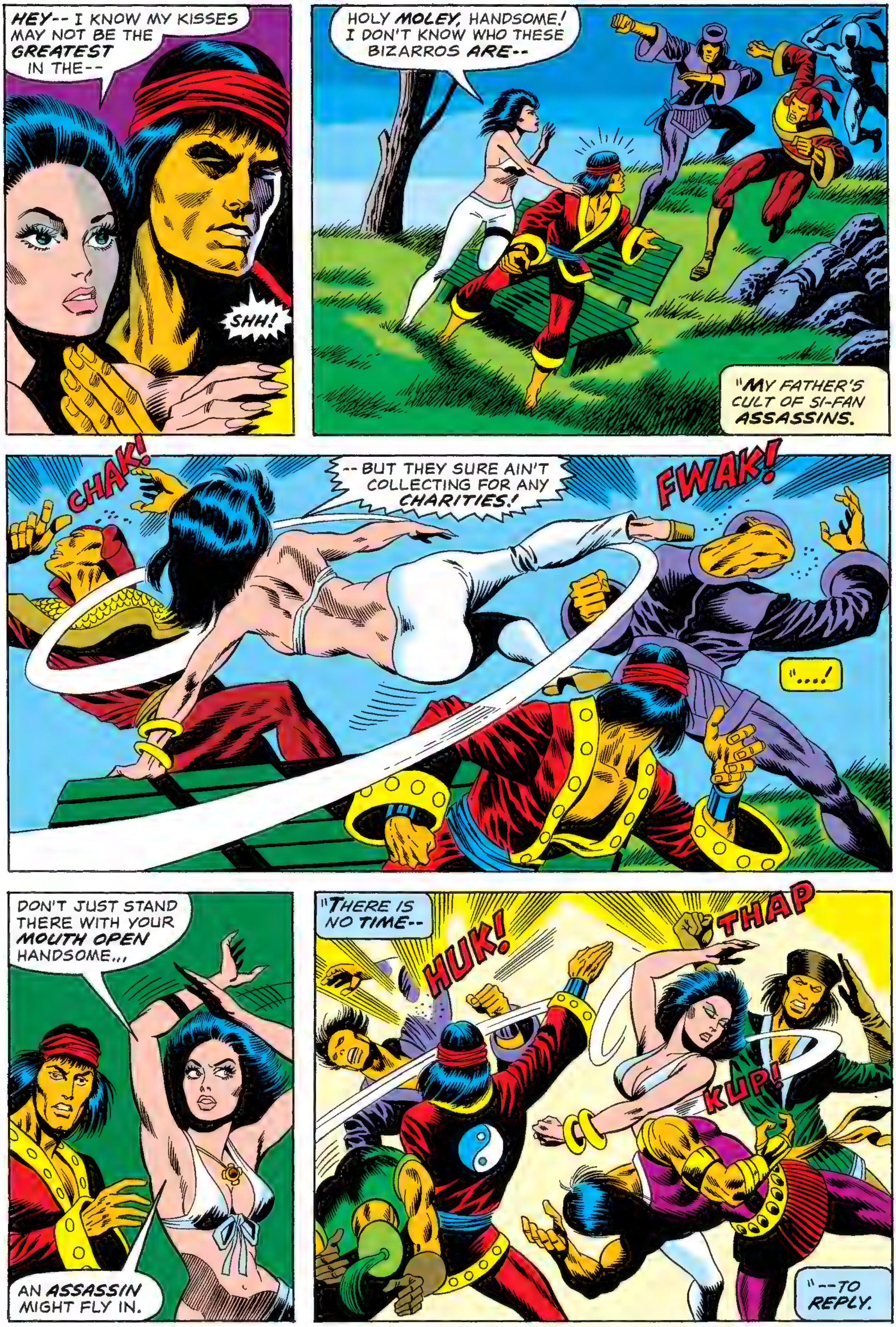

"COME UP AND *SEE* ME SOME TIME"...?
OR ARE THEY JUST A VERY *SIMPLE* AND VERY *SINCERE*...

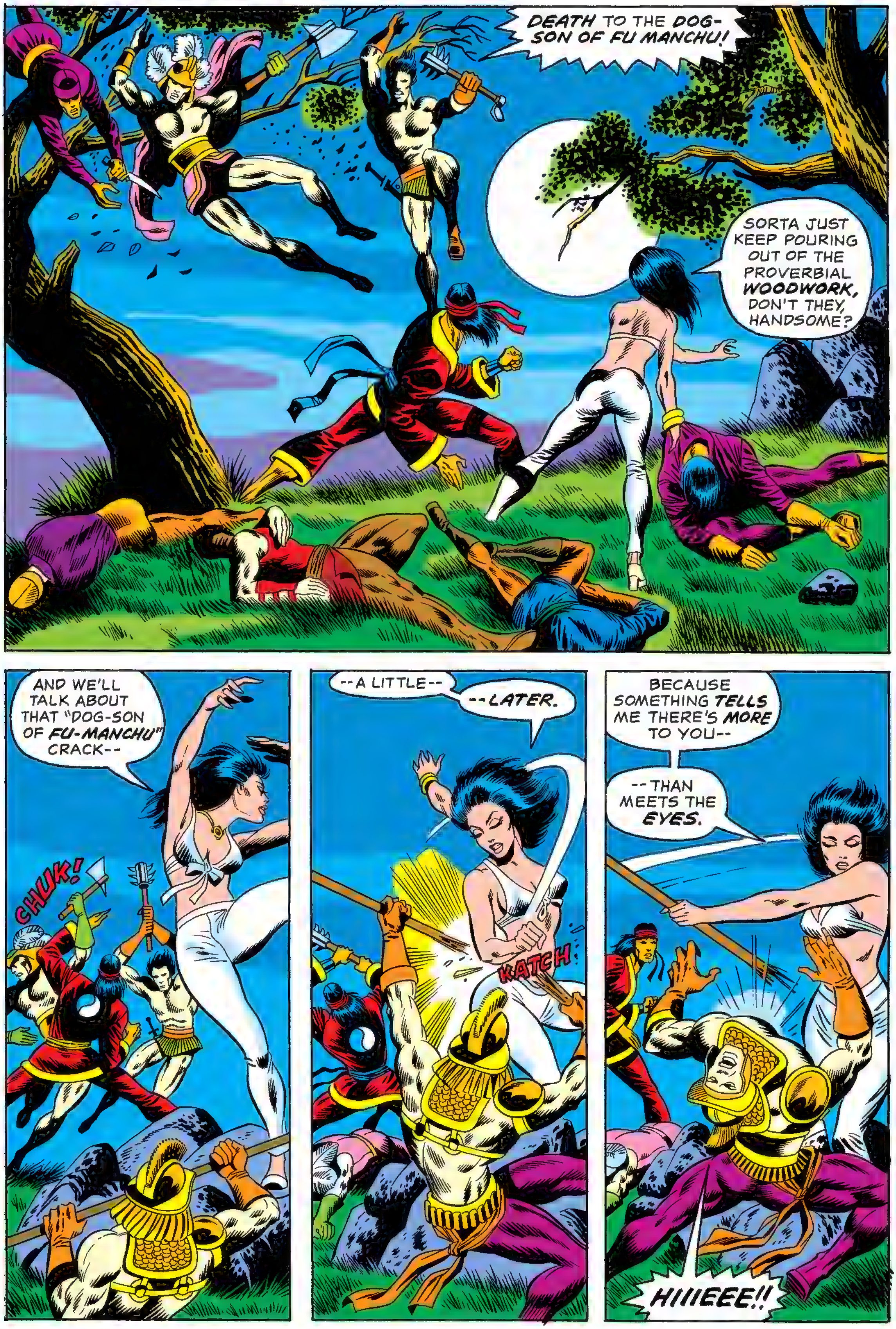

"...I'M GLAD I'VE *MET* YOU, SHANG-CHI."
I PREFER YOUR *LAST* WORDS... *SANDY*...
...FOR THEY *MIRROR* THE WORDS IN *MY MIND*...
AND AT THIS MOMENT, MY MIND IS *FILLED* WITH MAGIC.

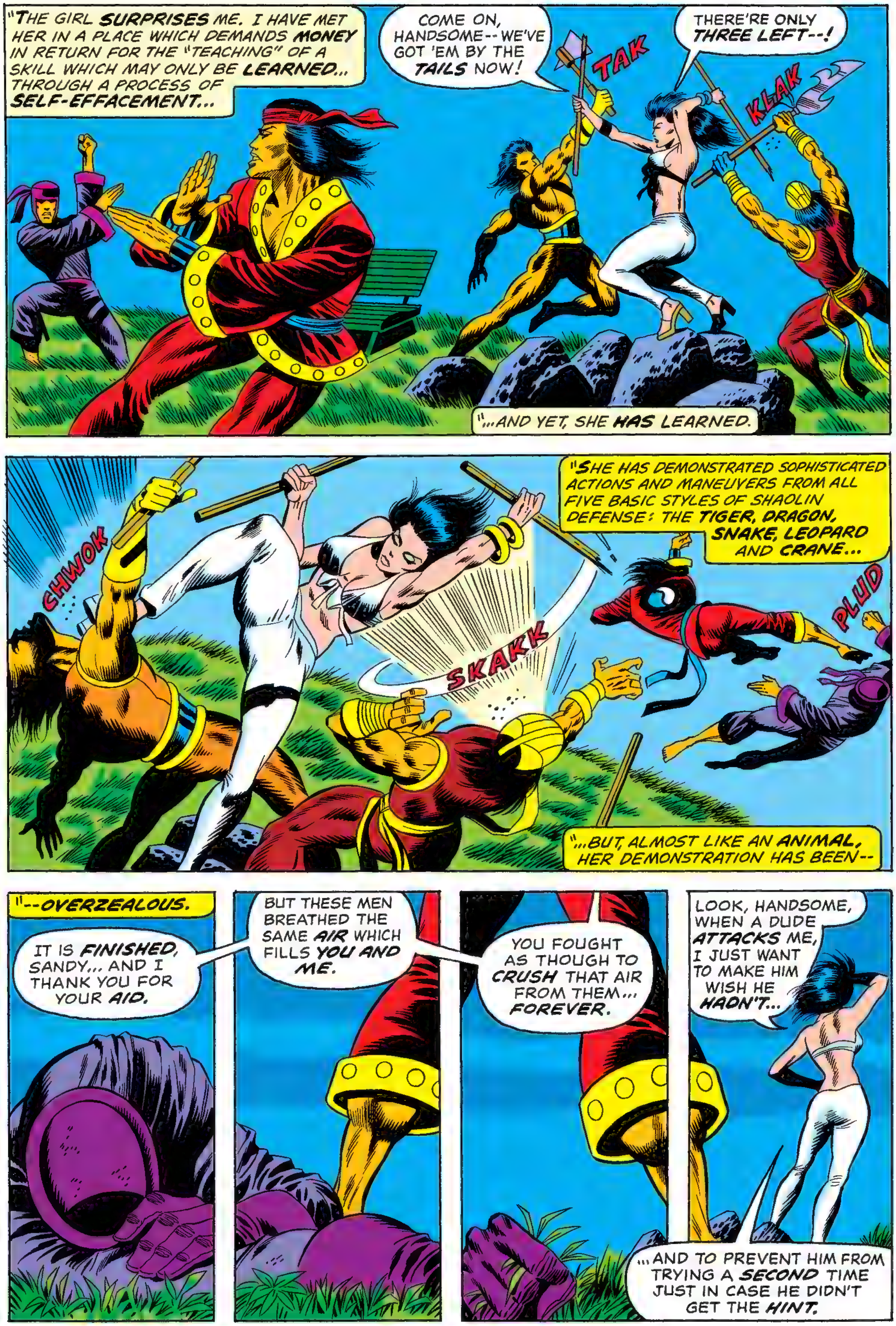

CHRR?
HONORABLE *FU MANCHU*, I WISH TO MAKE MY *REPORT*.
YOU MAY *SPEAK*.
PEKO AND DU CHARME ARE BOTH *EXTENSIONS* OF MY *OWN* EARS.

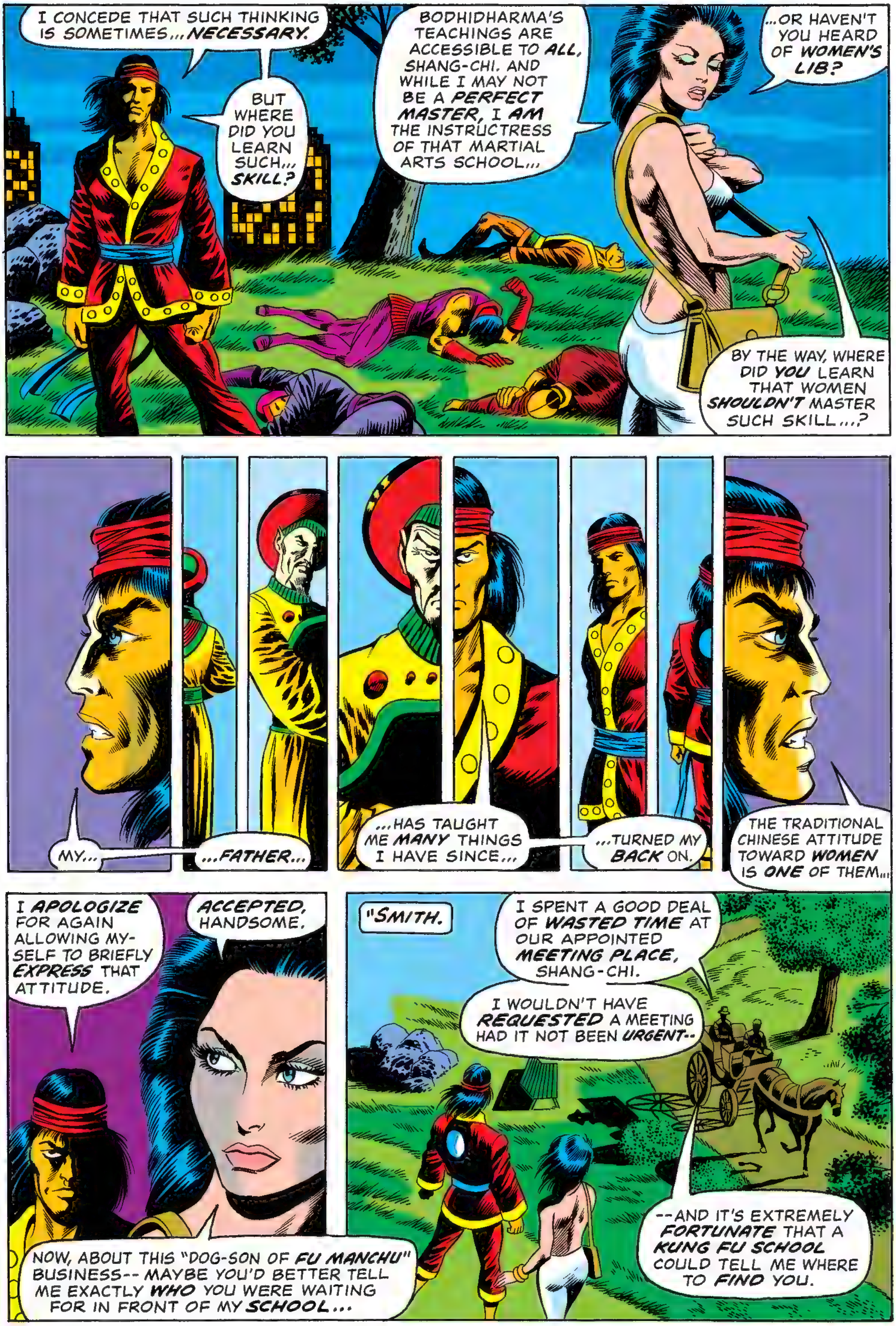

I REGRET I HAVE NOTHING *SIGNIFICANT* TO REPORT...
...OTHER THAN THAT YOUR SON WAS SUCCESSFULLY *DECEIVED* BY MY POSE AS A *DRUNK*...
...AND THEN HE MET A *GIRL* AT THE APPOINTED SITE OF MY *SURVEILLANCE.*
THIS *GIRL*...
WAS SHE AN *ENEMY*...?
I DON'T *BELIEVE* SO. THEY *HAVE* GONE TO CENTRAL PARK *TOGETHER,* BUT SHANG-CHI ACTED AS THOUGH HE'D NEVER *SEEN* HER BEFORE.
HOWEVER, HE *WAS* WAITING FOR SOMEONE *ELSE.*
NAYLAND SMITH, NO DOUBT.
A *PITY* ABOUT THE *GIRL*...
BUT OF COURSE WE MUST PROCEED *REGARDLESS* OF HER...
...FOR SHANG-CHI MUST *NOT* BE ALLOWED TO *JEOPARDIZE* MY CURRENT *ACTIVITIES.*
IS IT MAGIC, SHANG-CHI? OR DOES YOUR SPIRIT WISH TO ADVANCE ITSELF TO *FALSE* HEIGHTS?
IS THE MAGIC *TRUE* TO ITSELF, OR HAS IT BEEN *CREATED* BY TWO PEOPLE WHOSE SOULS ARE LONELY?
THESE ARE QUESTIONS *NO ONE* MAY ANSWER.
NO. THEY ARE MERELY *FRIGHTENING* QUESTIONS. WILL YOU *FACE* THEM? OR ARE YOU *AFRAID* TO REACH OUT AND...

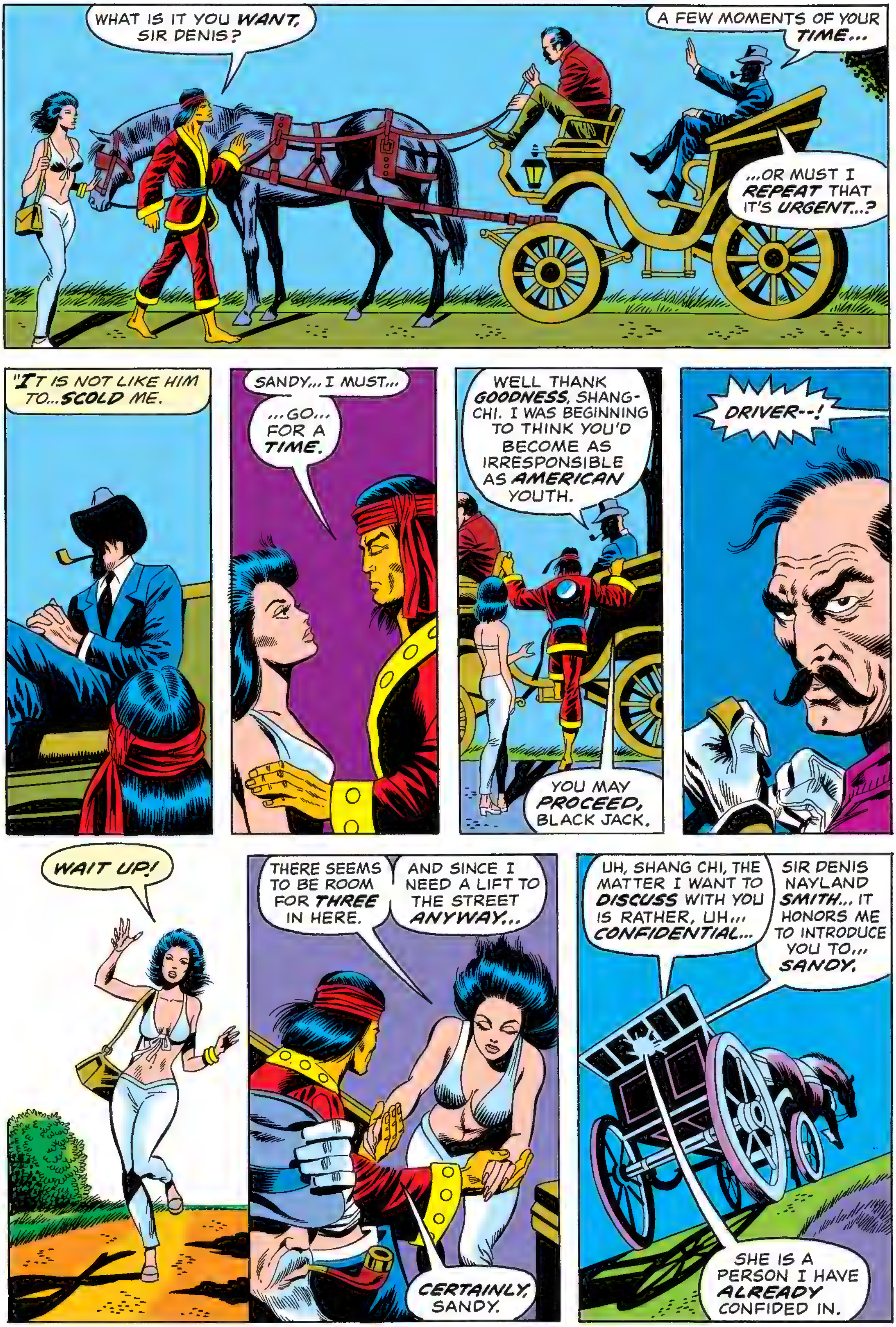

...KISS ME?
"THERE IS MAGIC IN THIS NIGHT.
"IT FLOATS IN THE AIR.
"AND WE LEARN SOMETHING, AS A COOL BREEZE CARRIES IT...
"...AND STIRS OUR HAIR.
"...
"A SOUND.

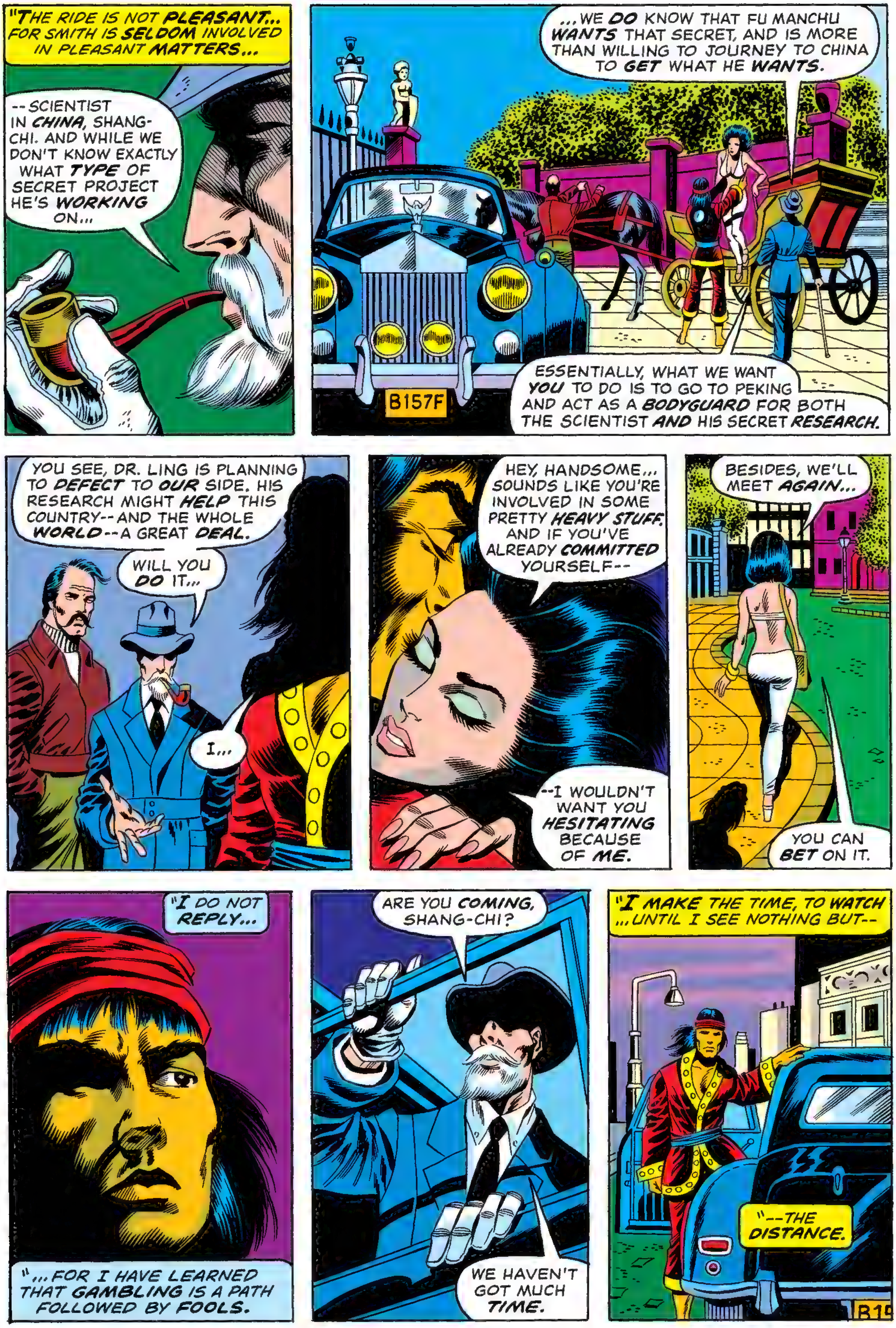

HEY-- I KNOW MY KISSES MAY NOT BE THE GREATEST IN THE--
SHH!
HOLY MOLEY, HANDSOME! I DON'T KNOW WHO THESE BIZARROS ARE--
"MY FATHER'S CULT OF SI-FAN ASSASSINS.
CHAK!
--BUT THEY SURE AIN'T COLLECTING FOR ANY CHARITIES!
FWAK!
"...!
DON'T JUST STAND THERE WITH YOUR MOUTH OPEN HANDSOME...
AN ASSASSIN MIGHT FLY IN.
"THERE IS NO TIME--
HUK!
THAP
KUP!
"--TO REPLY.

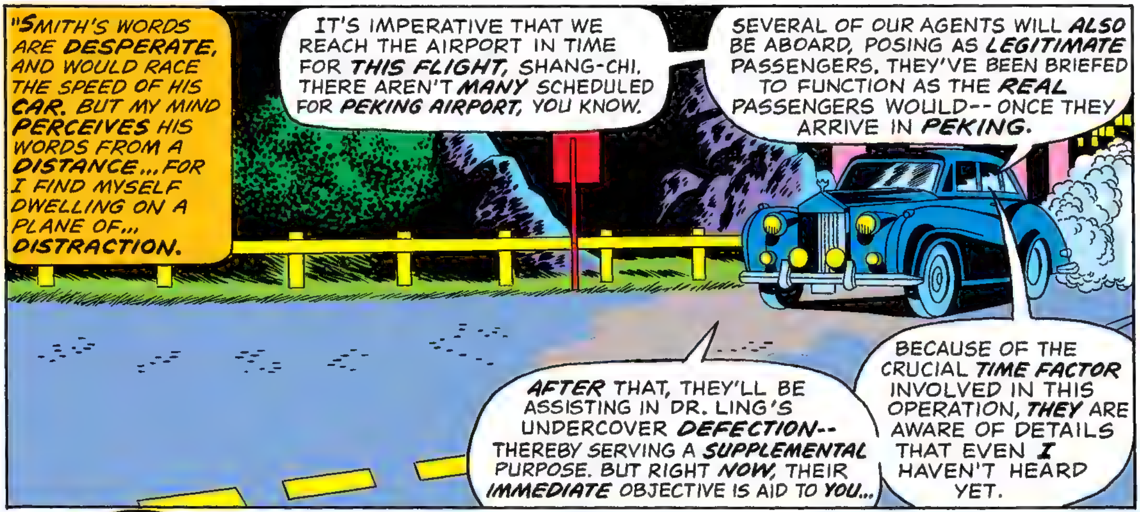

DEATH TO THE DOG-SON OF FU MANCHU!
SORTA JUST KEEP POURING OUT OF THE PROVERBIAL WOODWORK, DON'T THEY, HANDSOME?
AND WE'LL TALK ABOUT THAT "DOG-SON OF FU-MANCHU" CRACK--
CHUK!
--A LITTLE--
--LATER.
KATCH
BECAUSE SOMETHING TELLS ME THERE'S MORE TO YOU--
--THAN MEETS THE EYES.
HIIIEEE!!

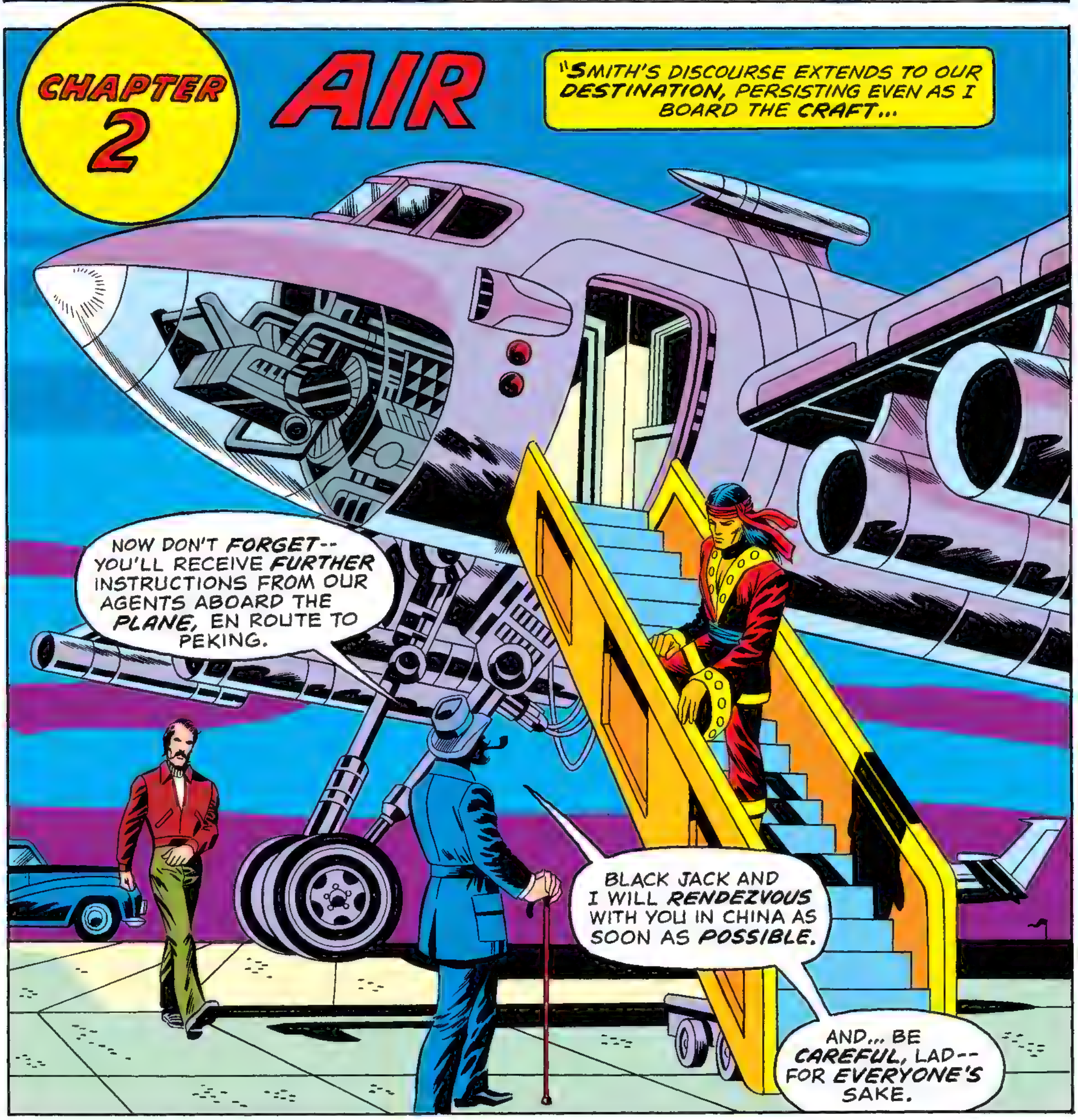

"THE GIRL SURPRISES ME. I HAVE MET HER IN A PLACE WHICH DEMANDS MONEY IN RETURN FOR THE "TEACHING" OF A SKILL WHICH MAY ONLY BE LEARNED... THROUGH A PROCESS OF SELF-EFFACEMENT...
COME ON, HANDSOME--WE'VE GOT 'EM BY THE TAILS NOW!
TAK
THERE'RE ONLY THREE LEFT--!
KLAK
"...AND YET, SHE HAS LEARNED.
"SHE HAS DEMONSTRATED SOPHISTICATED ACTIONS AND MANEUVERS FROM ALL FIVE BASIC STYLES OF SHAOLIN DEFENSE: THE TIGER, DRAGON, SNAKE, LEOPARD AND CRANE...
CHWOK
SKAKK
PLUD
"...BUT, ALMOST LIKE AN ANIMAL, HER DEMONSTRATION HAS BEEN--
"--OVERZEALOUS.
IT IS FINISHED, SANDY... AND I THANK YOU FOR YOUR AID.
BUT THESE MEN BREATHED THE SAME AIR WHICH FILLS YOU AND ME.
YOU FOUGHT AS THOUGH TO CRUSH THAT AIR FROM THEM... FOREVER.
LOOK, HANDSOME, WHEN A DUDE ATTACKS ME, I JUST WANT TO MAKE HIM WISH HE HADN'T...
...AND TO PREVENT HIM FROM TRYING A SECOND TIME JUST IN CASE HE DIDN'T GET THE HINT.

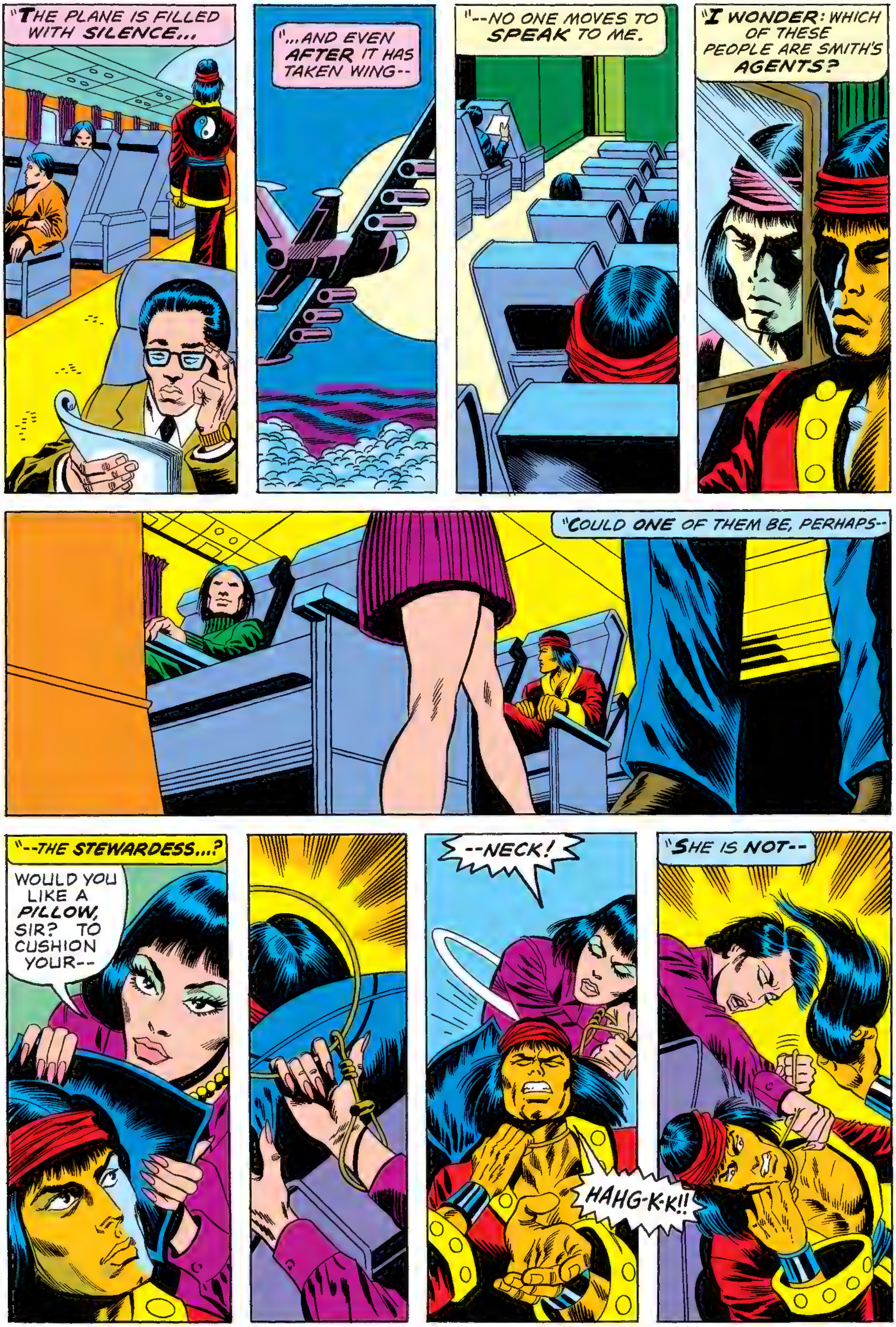

I CONCEDE THAT SUCH THINKING IS SOMETIMES... ***NECESSARY.***
BUT WHERE DID YOU LEARN SUCH... ***SKILL?***
BODHIDHARMA'S TEACHINGS ARE ACCESSIBLE TO ***ALL,*** SHANG-CHI. AND WHILE I MAY NOT BE A ***PERFECT MASTER,*** I ***AM*** THE INSTRUCTRESS OF THAT MARTIAL ARTS SCHOOL...
...OR HAVEN'T YOU HEARD OF ***WOMEN'S LIB?***
BY THE WAY, WHERE DID ***YOU*** LEARN THAT WOMEN ***SHOULDN'T*** MASTER SUCH SKILL...?
MY...
...***FATHER...***
...HAS TAUGHT ME ***MANY*** THINGS I HAVE SINCE...
...TURNED MY ***BACK*** ON.
THE TRADITIONAL CHINESE ATTITUDE TOWARD ***WOMEN*** IS ***ONE*** OF THEM...
I ***APOLOGIZE*** FOR AGAIN ALLOWING MYSELF TO BRIEFLY ***EXPRESS*** THAT ATTITUDE.
ACCEPTED, HANDSOME.
NOW, ABOUT THIS "DOG-SON OF ***FU MANCHU***" BUSINESS-- MAYBE YOU'D BETTER TELL ME EXACTLY ***WHO*** YOU WERE WAITING FOR IN FRONT OF MY ***SCHOOL...***
"***SMITH.***
I SPENT A GOOD DEAL OF ***WASTED TIME*** AT OUR APPOINTED ***MEETING PLACE,*** SHANG-CHI.
I WOULDN'T HAVE ***REQUESTED*** A MEETING HAD IT NOT BEEN ***URGENT--***
--AND IT'S EXTREMELY ***FORTUNATE*** THAT A ***KUNG FU SCHOOL*** COULD TELL ME WHERE TO ***FIND*** YOU.

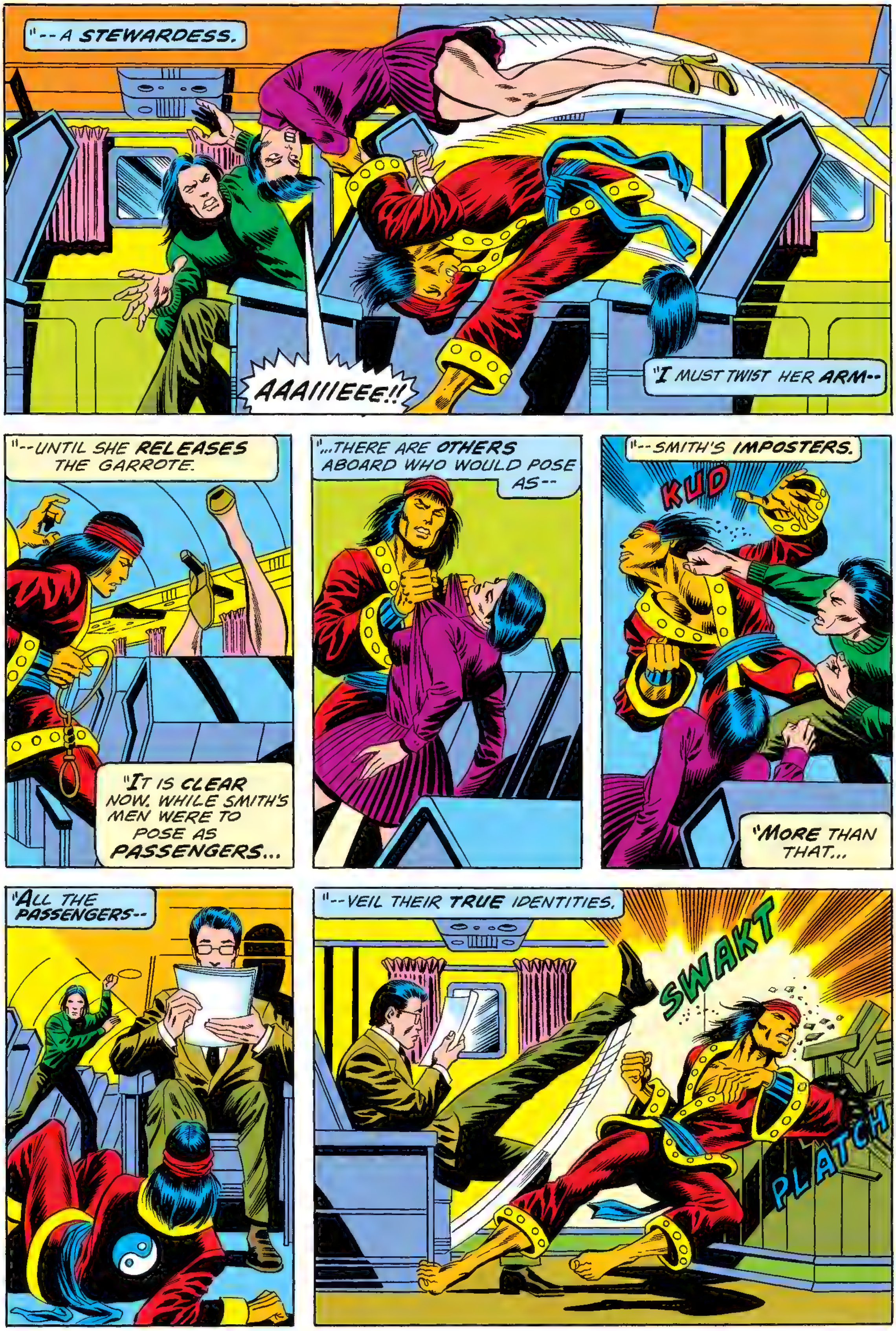

WHAT IS IT YOU *WANT*, SIR DENIS?
A FEW MOMENTS OF YOUR *TIME...*
...OR MUST I *REPEAT* THAT IT'S *URGENT...?*
"*IT IS NOT LIKE HIM TO...SCOLD ME.*
SANDY... I MUST...
...GO... FOR A *TIME*.
WELL THANK *GOODNESS*, SHANG-CHI. I WAS BEGINNING TO THINK YOU'D BECOME AS IRRESPONSIBLE AS *AMERICAN* YOUTH.
YOU MAY *PROCEED*, BLACK JACK.
DRIVER--!
WAIT UP!
THERE SEEMS TO BE ROOM FOR *THREE* IN HERE.
AND SINCE I NEED A LIFT TO THE STREET *ANYWAY...*
CERTAINLY, SANDY.
UH, SHANG CHI, THE MATTER I WANT TO *DISCUSS* WITH YOU IS RATHER, UH... *CONFIDENTIAL...*
SIR DENIS NAYLAND *SMITH*... IT HONORS ME TO INTRODUCE YOU TO... *SANDY*.
SHE IS A PERSON I HAVE *ALREADY* CONFIDED IN.

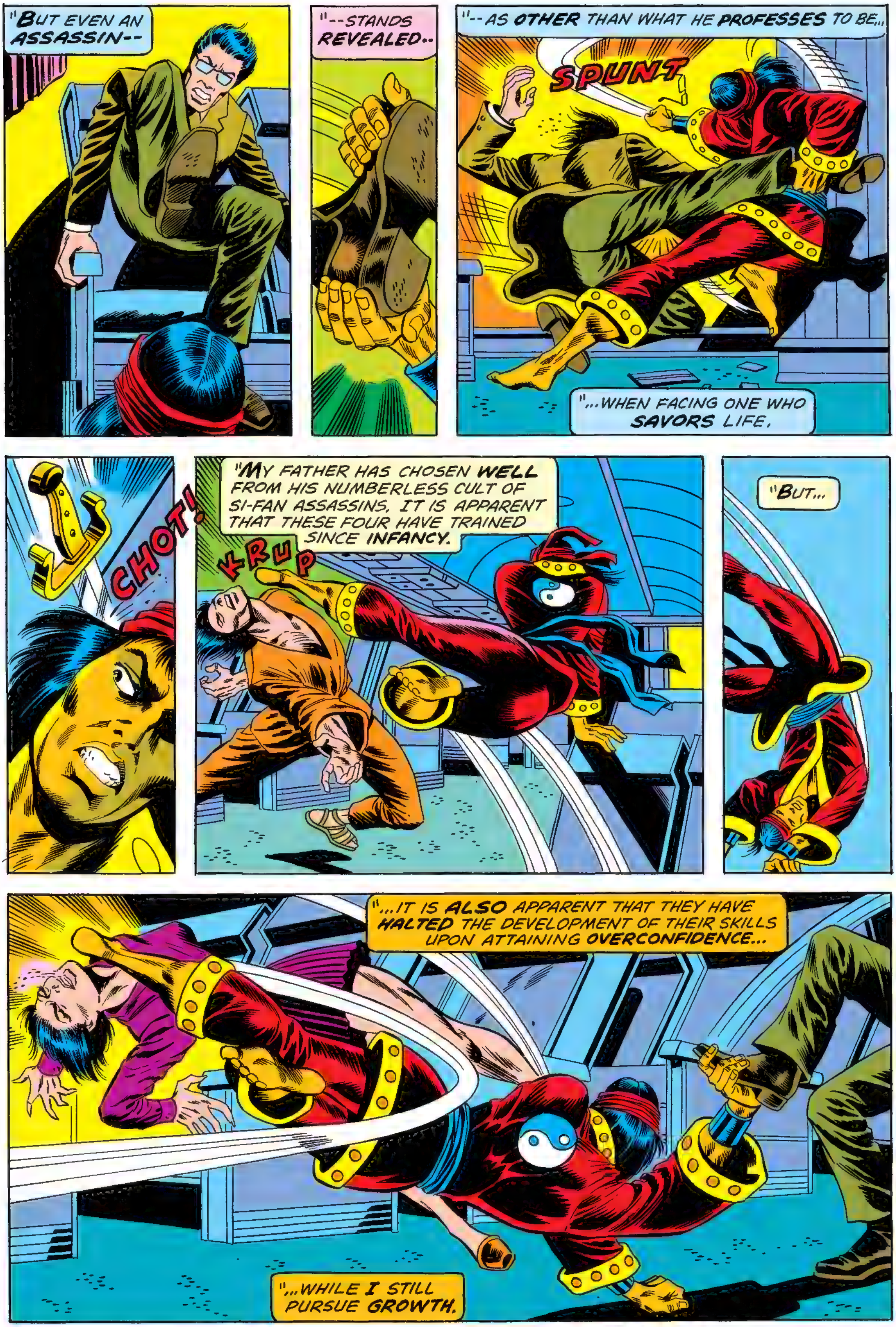

"THE RIDE IS NOT PLEASANT... FOR SMITH IS SELDOM INVOLVED IN PLEASANT MATTERS...
--SCIENTIST IN CHINA, SHANG-CHI. AND WHILE WE DON'T KNOW EXACTLY WHAT TYPE OF SECRET PROJECT HE'S WORKING ON...
...WE DO KNOW THAT FU MANCHU WANTS THAT SECRET, AND IS MORE THAN WILLING TO JOURNEY TO CHINA TO GET WHAT HE WANTS.
B157F
ESSENTIALLY, WHAT WE WANT YOU TO DO IS TO GO TO PEKING AND ACT AS A BODYGUARD FOR BOTH THE SCIENTIST AND HIS SECRET RESEARCH.
YOU SEE, DR. LING IS PLANNING TO DEFECT TO OUR SIDE. HIS RESEARCH MIGHT HELP THIS COUNTRY--AND THE WHOLE WORLD--A GREAT DEAL.
WILL YOU DO IT...
I...
HEY, HANDSOME... SOUNDS LIKE YOU'RE INVOLVED IN SOME PRETTY HEAVY STUFF, AND IF YOU'VE ALREADY COMMITTED YOURSELF--
--I WOULDN'T WANT YOU HESITATING BECAUSE OF ME.
BESIDES, WE'LL MEET AGAIN...
YOU CAN BET ON IT.
"I DO NOT REPLY...
"...FOR I HAVE LEARNED THAT GAMBLING IS A PATH FOLLOWED BY FOOLS.
ARE YOU COMING, SHANG-CHI?
WE HAVEN'T GOT MUCH TIME.
"I MAKE THE TIME, TO WATCH ...UNTIL I SEE NOTHING BUT--
"--THE DISTANCE.

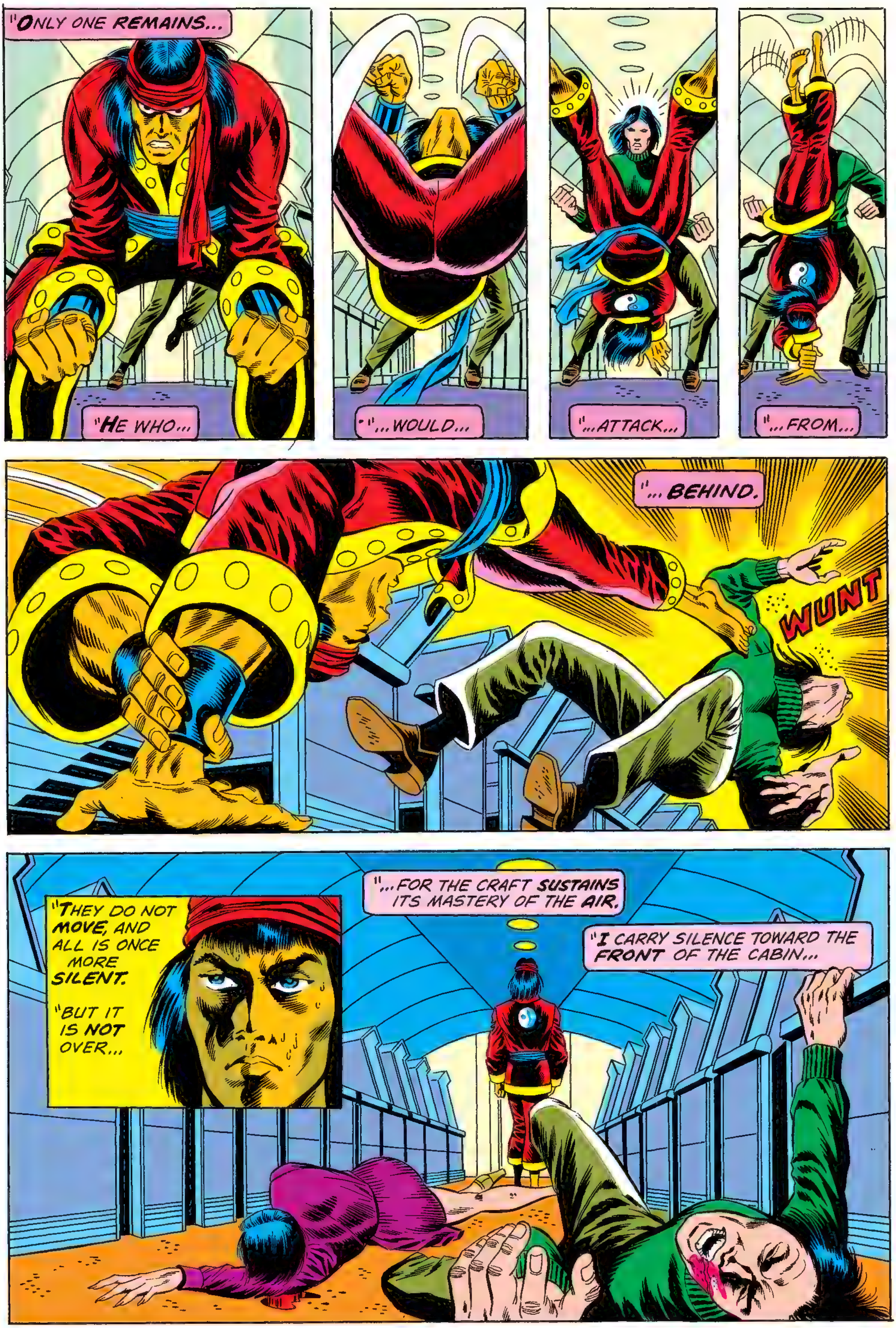

"SMITH'S WORDS ARE DESPERATE, AND WOULD RACE THE SPEED OF HIS CAR. BUT MY MIND PERCEIVES HIS WORDS FROM A DISTANCE... FOR I FIND MYSELF DWELLING ON A PLANE OF... DISTRACTION.
IT'S IMPERATIVE THAT WE REACH THE AIRPORT IN TIME FOR THIS FLIGHT, SHANG-CHI. THERE AREN'T MANY SCHEDULED FOR PEKING AIRPORT, YOU KNOW.
SEVERAL OF OUR AGENTS WILL ALSO BE ABOARD, POSING AS LEGITIMATE PASSENGERS. THEY'VE BEEN BRIEFED TO FUNCTION AS THE REAL PASSENGERS WOULD-- ONCE THEY ARRIVE IN PEKING.
AFTER THAT, THEY'LL BE ASSISTING IN DR. LING'S UNDERCOVER DEFECTION-- THEREBY SERVING A SUPPLEMENTAL PURPOSE. BUT RIGHT NOW, THEIR IMMEDIATE OBJECTIVE IS AID TO YOU...
BECAUSE OF THE CRUCIAL TIME FACTOR INVOLVED IN THIS OPERATION, THEY ARE AWARE OF DETAILS THAT EVEN I HAVEN'T HEARD YET.

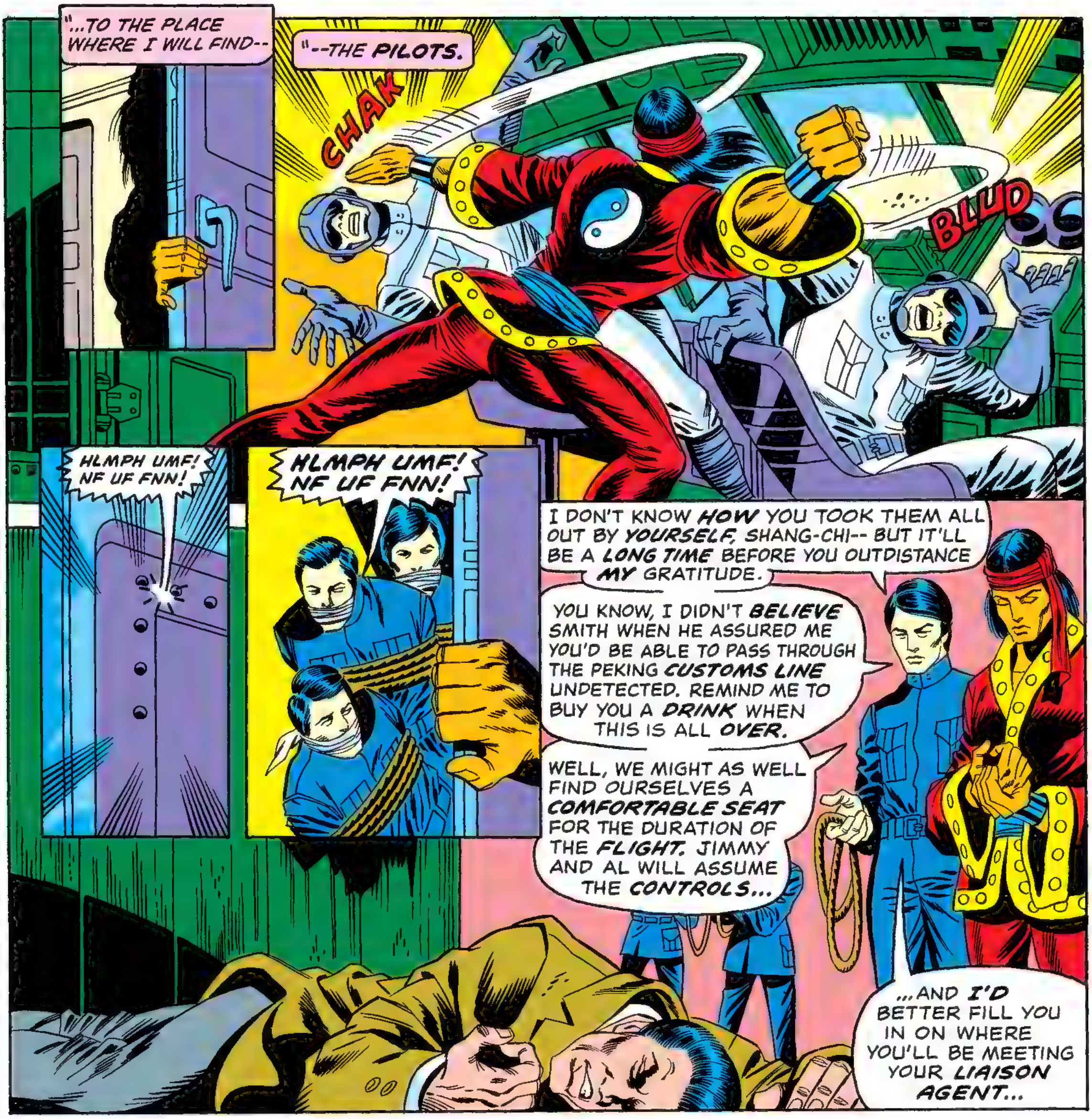

CHAPTER 2
AIR
"SMITH'S DISCOURSE EXTENDS TO OUR DESTINATION, PERSISTING EVEN AS I BOARD THE CRAFT...
NOW DON'T FORGET-- YOU'LL RECEIVE FURTHER INSTRUCTIONS FROM OUR AGENTS ABOARD THE PLANE, EN ROUTE TO PEKING.
BLACK JACK AND I WILL RENDEZVOUS WITH YOU IN CHINA AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.
AND... BE CAREFUL, LAD-- FOR EVERYONE'S SAKE.

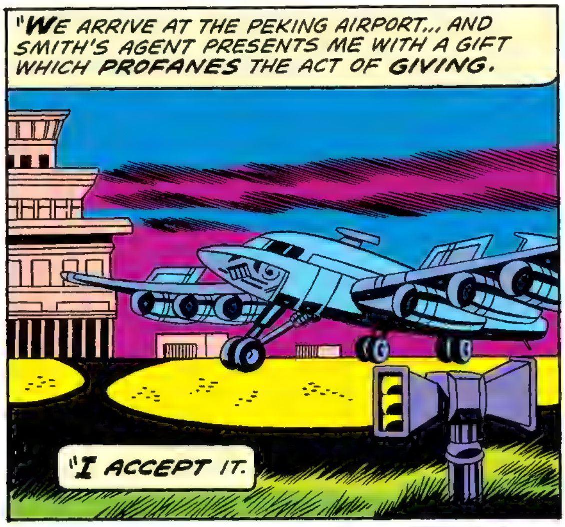

"THE PLANE IS FILLED WITH SILENCE...
"...AND EVEN AFTER IT HAS TAKEN WING--
"--NO ONE MOVES TO SPEAK TO ME.
"I WONDER: WHICH OF THESE PEOPLE ARE SMITH'S AGENTS?
"COULD ONE OF THEM BE, PERHAPS--
"--THE STEWARDESS...?
WOULD YOU LIKE A PILLOW, SIR? TO CUSHION YOUR--
--NECK!
HAHG-K-K!!
"SHE IS NOT--

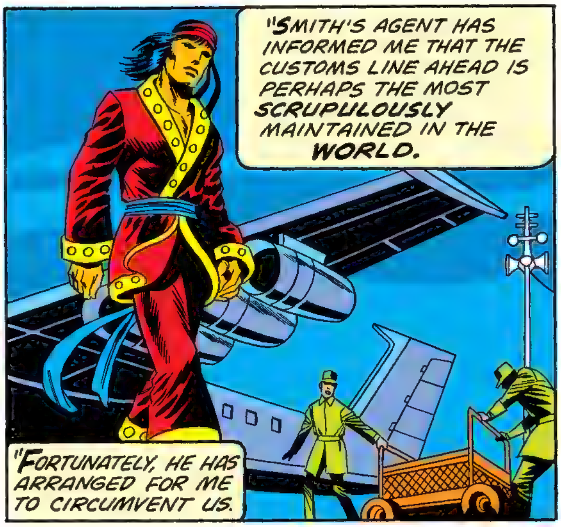

"--A STEWARDESS.
AAAIIIEEE!!
"I MUST TWIST HER ARM--
"--UNTIL SHE RELEASES THE GARROTE.
"IT IS CLEAR NOW. WHILE SMITH'S MEN WERE TO POSE AS PASSENGERS...
"...THERE ARE OTHERS ABOARD WHO WOULD POSE AS--
"--SMITH'S IMPOSTERS.
KUD
"MORE THAN THAT...
"ALL THE PASSENGERS--
"--VEIL THEIR TRUE IDENTITIES.
SWAKT
PLATCH

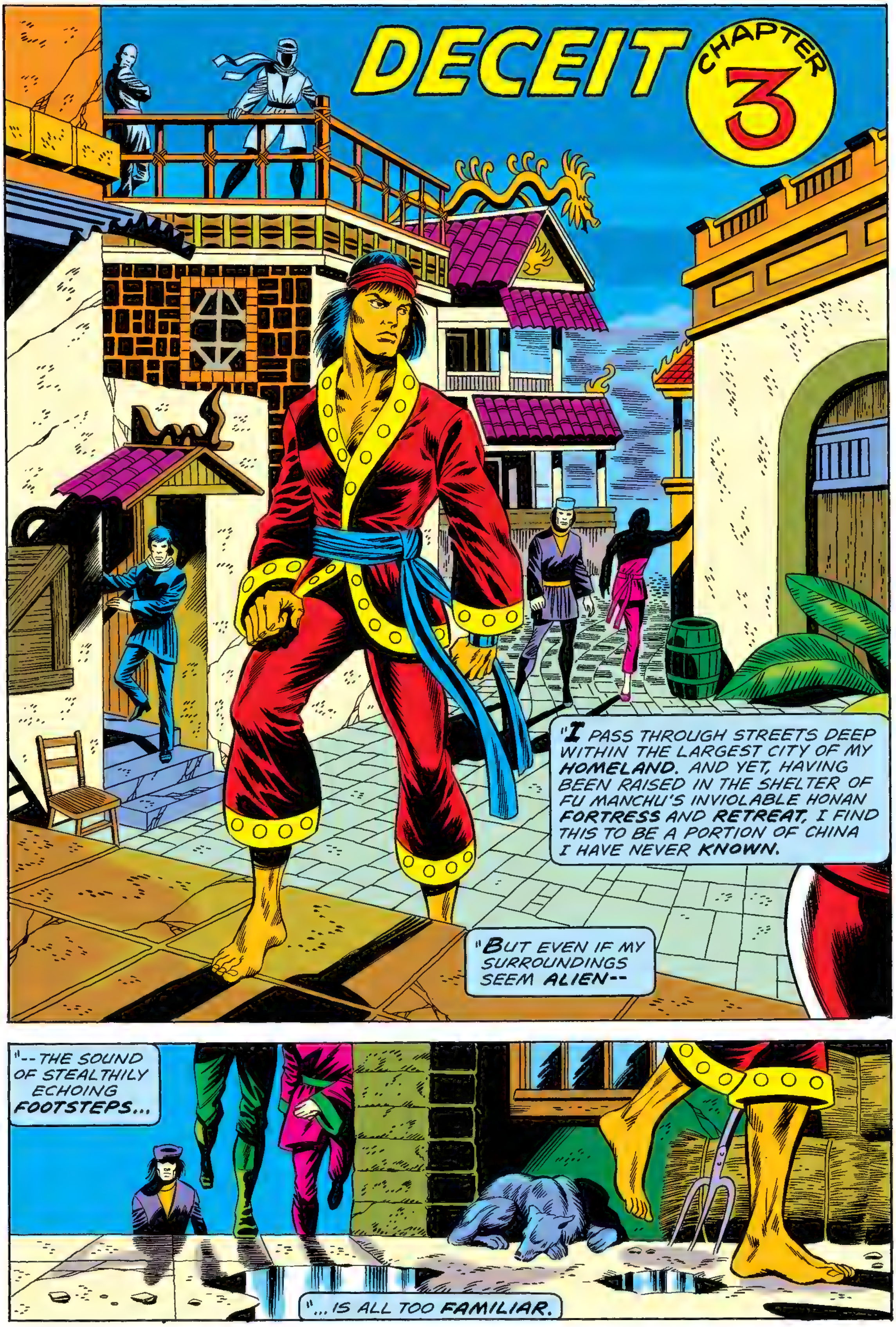

"BUT EVEN AN ASSASSIN--
"--STANDS REVEALED..
"--AS OTHER THAN WHAT HE PROFESSES TO BE...
SPUNT
"...WHEN FACING ONE WHO SAVORS LIFE.
CHOT!
"MY FATHER HAS CHOSEN WELL FROM HIS NUMBERLESS CULT OF SI-FAN ASSASSINS. IT IS APPARENT THAT THESE FOUR HAVE TRAINED SINCE INFANCY.
KRUP
"BUT...
"...IT IS ALSO APPARENT THAT THEY HAVE HALTED THE DEVELOPMENT OF THEIR SKILLS UPON ATTAINING OVERCONFIDENCE...
"...WHILE I STILL PURSUE GROWTH.

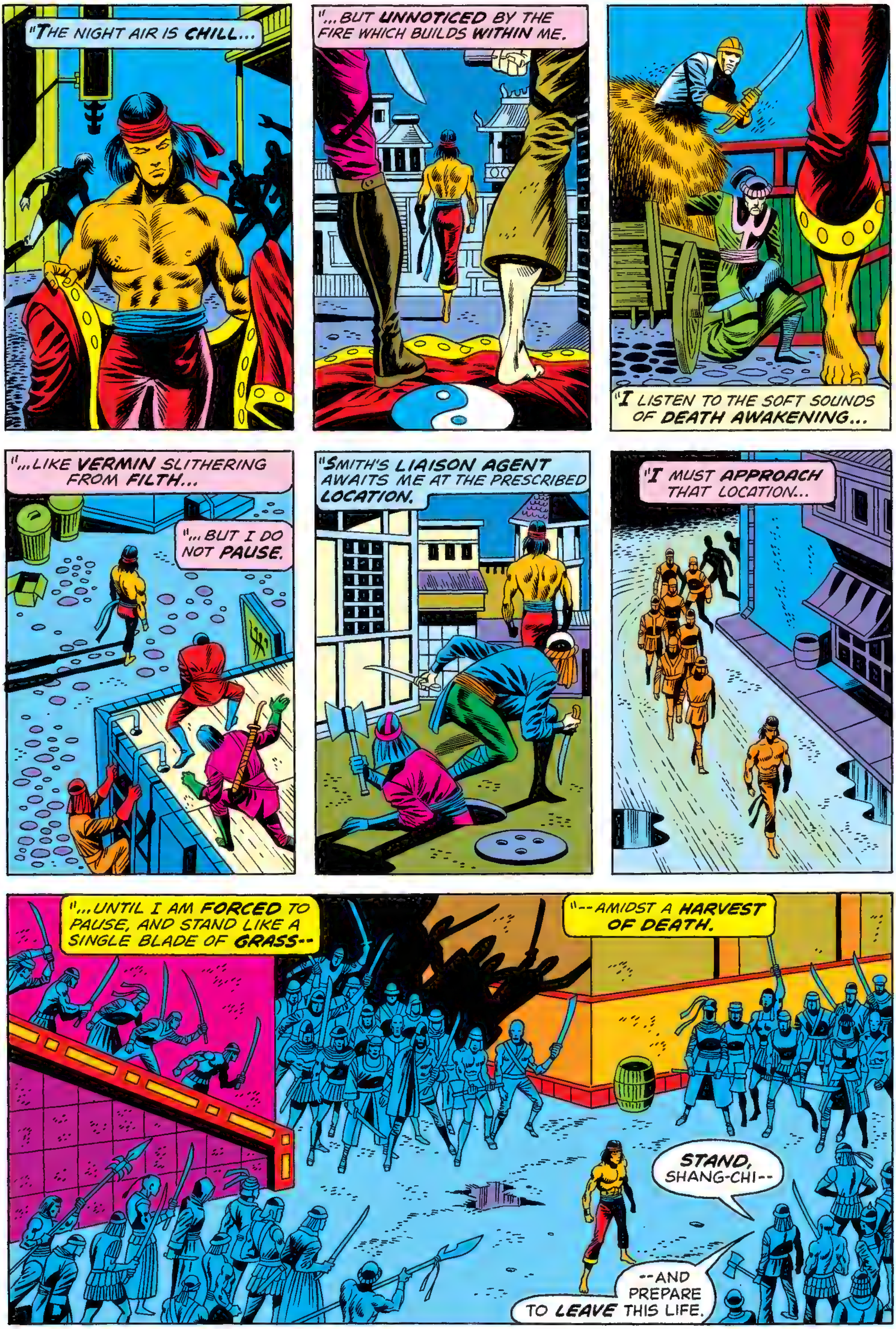

"ONLY ONE REMAINS...
"HE WHO...
"...WOULD...
"...ATTACK...
"...FROM...
"...BEHIND.
WUNT
"THEY DO NOT MOVE, AND ALL IS ONCE MORE SILENT.
"BUT IT IS NOT OVER...
"...FOR THE CRAFT SUSTAINS ITS MASTERY OF THE AIR.
"I CARRY SILENCE TOWARD THE FRONT OF THE CABIN...

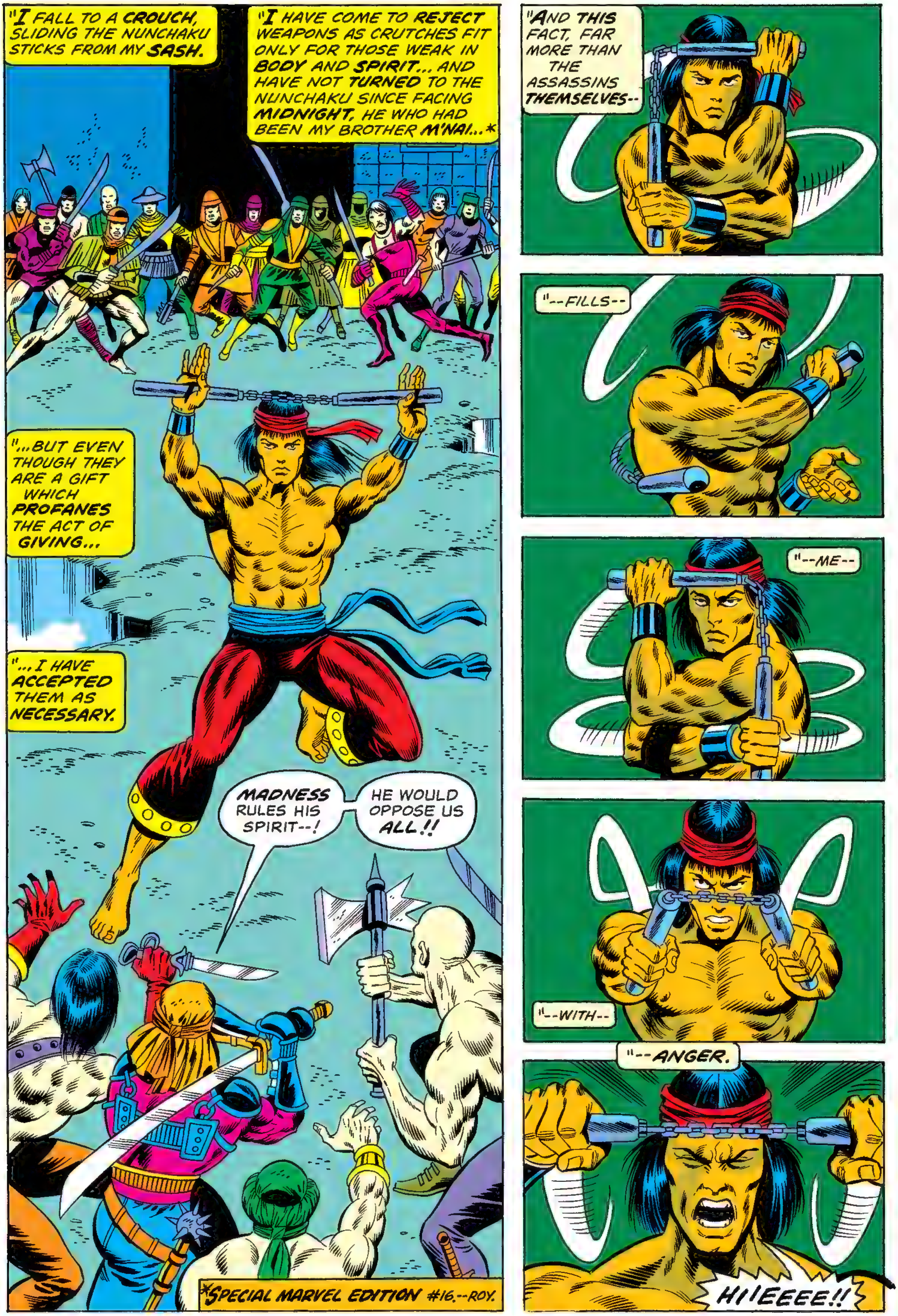

"...TO THE PLACE WHERE I WILL FIND--
"--THE PILOTS.
CHAK
BLUD
HLMPH UMF! NF UF FNN!
HLMPH UMF! NF UF FNN!
I DON'T KNOW HOW YOU TOOK THEM ALL OUT BY YOURSELF, SHANG-CHI-- BUT IT'LL BE A LONG TIME BEFORE YOU OUTDISTANCE MY GRATITUDE.
YOU KNOW, I DIDN'T BELIEVE SMITH WHEN HE ASSURED ME YOU'D BE ABLE TO PASS THROUGH THE PEKING CUSTOMS LINE UNDETECTED. REMIND ME TO BUY YOU A DRINK WHEN THIS IS ALL OVER.
WELL, WE MIGHT AS WELL FIND OURSELVES A COMFORTABLE SEAT FOR THE DURATION OF THE FLIGHT. JIMMY AND AL WILL ASSUME THE CONTROLS...
...AND I'D BETTER FILL YOU IN ON WHERE YOU'LL BE MEETING YOUR LIAISON AGENT...

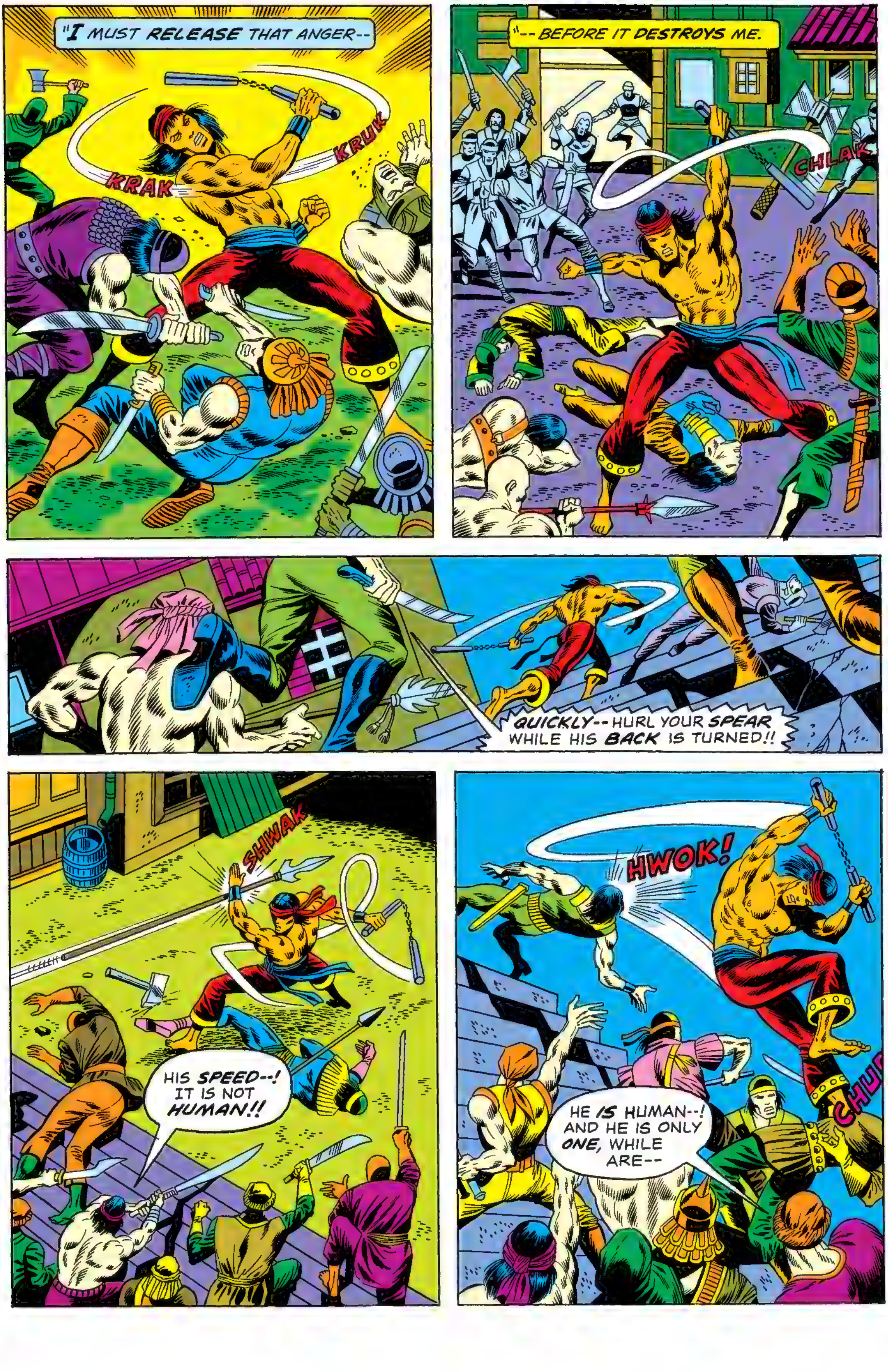

"WE ARRIVE AT THE PEKING AIRPORT... AND SMITH'S AGENT PRESENTS ME WITH A GIFT WHICH PROFANES THE ACT OF GIVING.
"I ACCEPT IT.

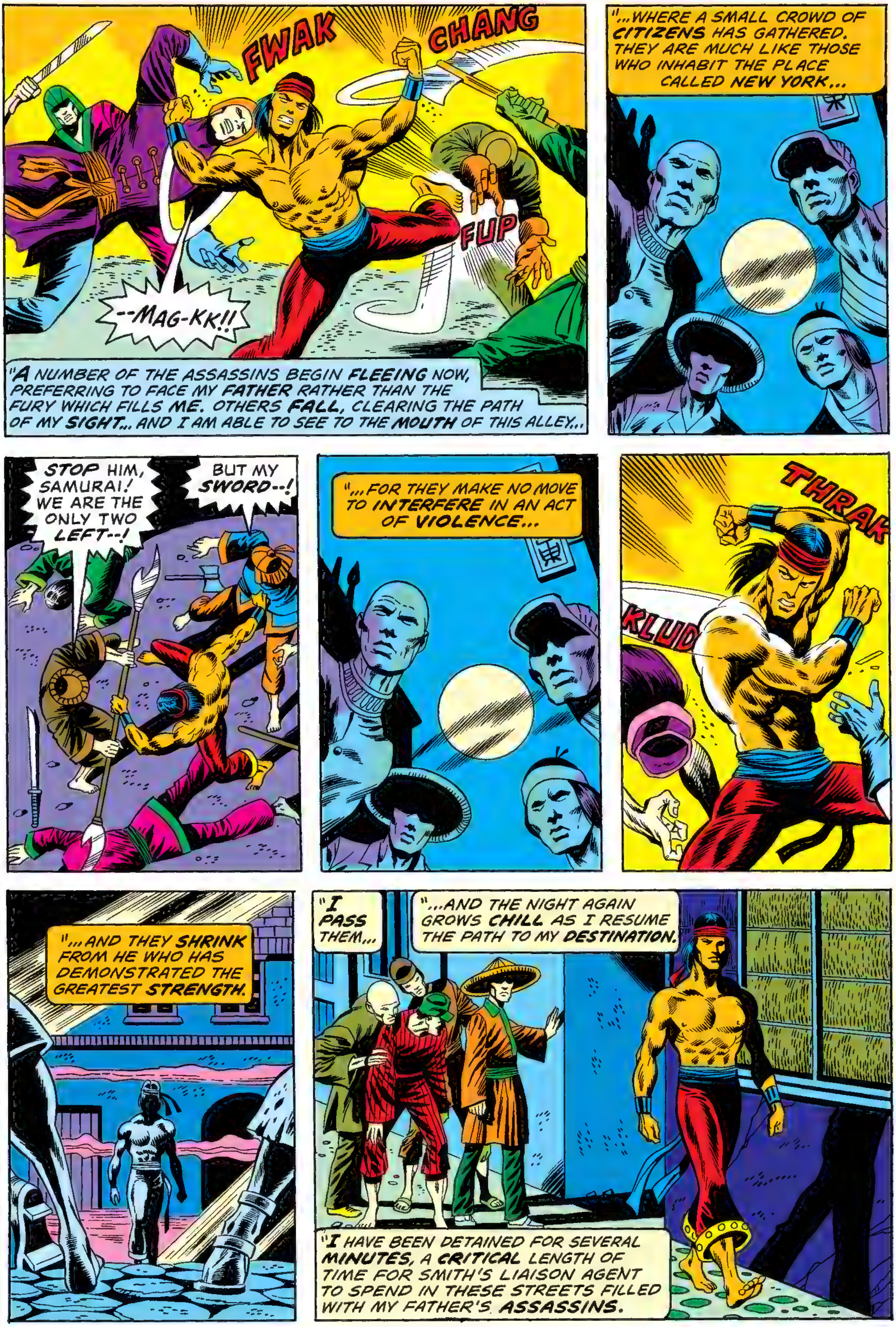

"SMITH'S AGENT HAS INFORMED ME THAT THE CUSTOMS LINE AHEAD IS PERHAPS THE MOST SCRUPULOUSLY MAINTAINED IN THE WORLD.
"FORTUNATELY, HE HAS ARRANGED FOR ME TO CIRCUMVENT US.

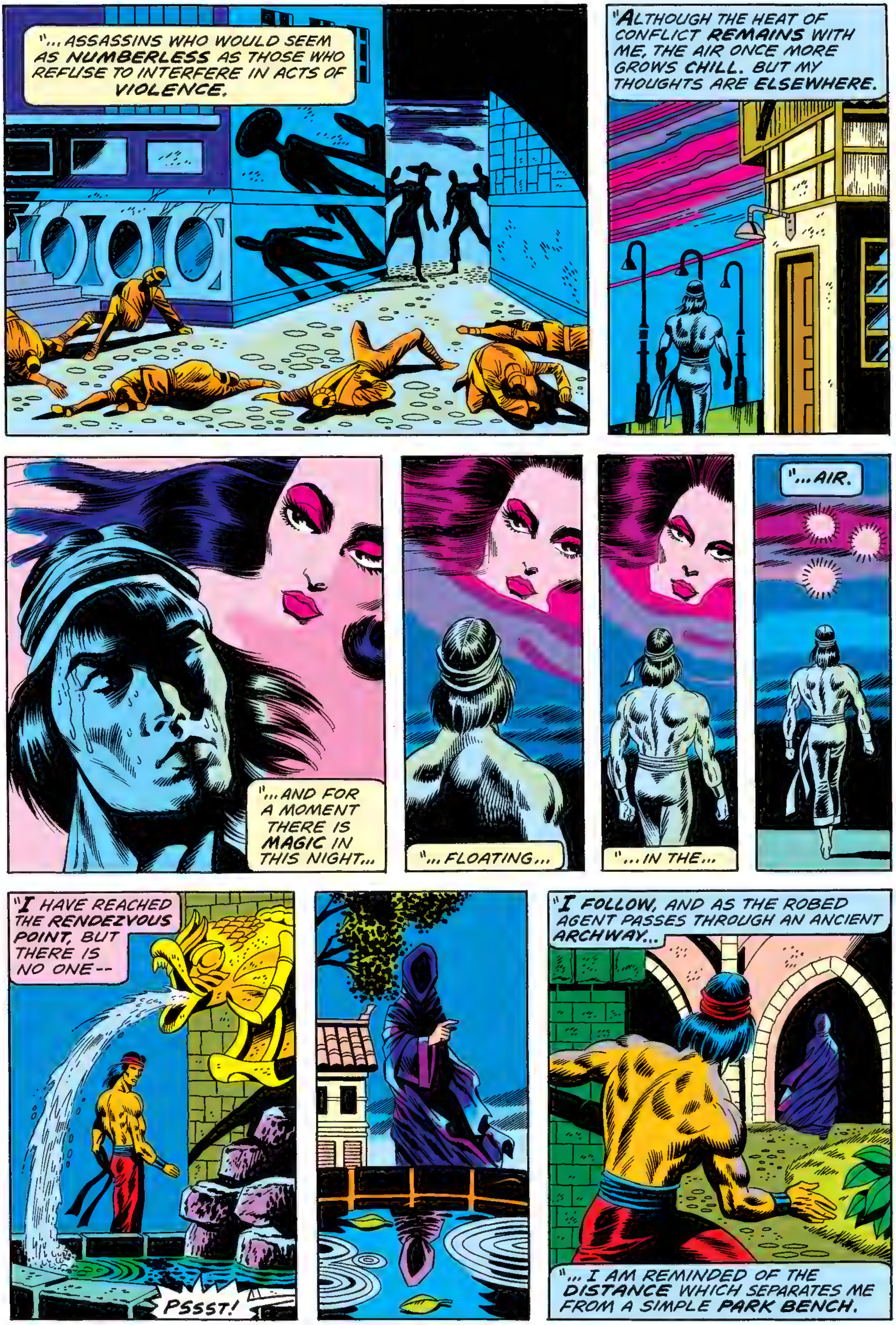

DECEIT
CHAPTER 3
"I PASS THROUGH STREETS DEEP WITHIN THE LARGEST CITY OF MY **HOMELAND**. AND YET, HAVING BEEN RAISED IN THE SHELTER OF FU MANCHU'S INVIOLABLE HONAN **FORTRESS** AND **RETREAT,** I FIND THIS TO BE A PORTION OF CHINA I HAVE NEVER **KNOWN.**
"BUT EVEN IF MY SURROUNDINGS SEEM **ALIEN**--
"--THE SOUND OF STEALTHILY ECHOING **FOOTSTEPS...**
"...IS ALL TOO **FAMILIAR.**

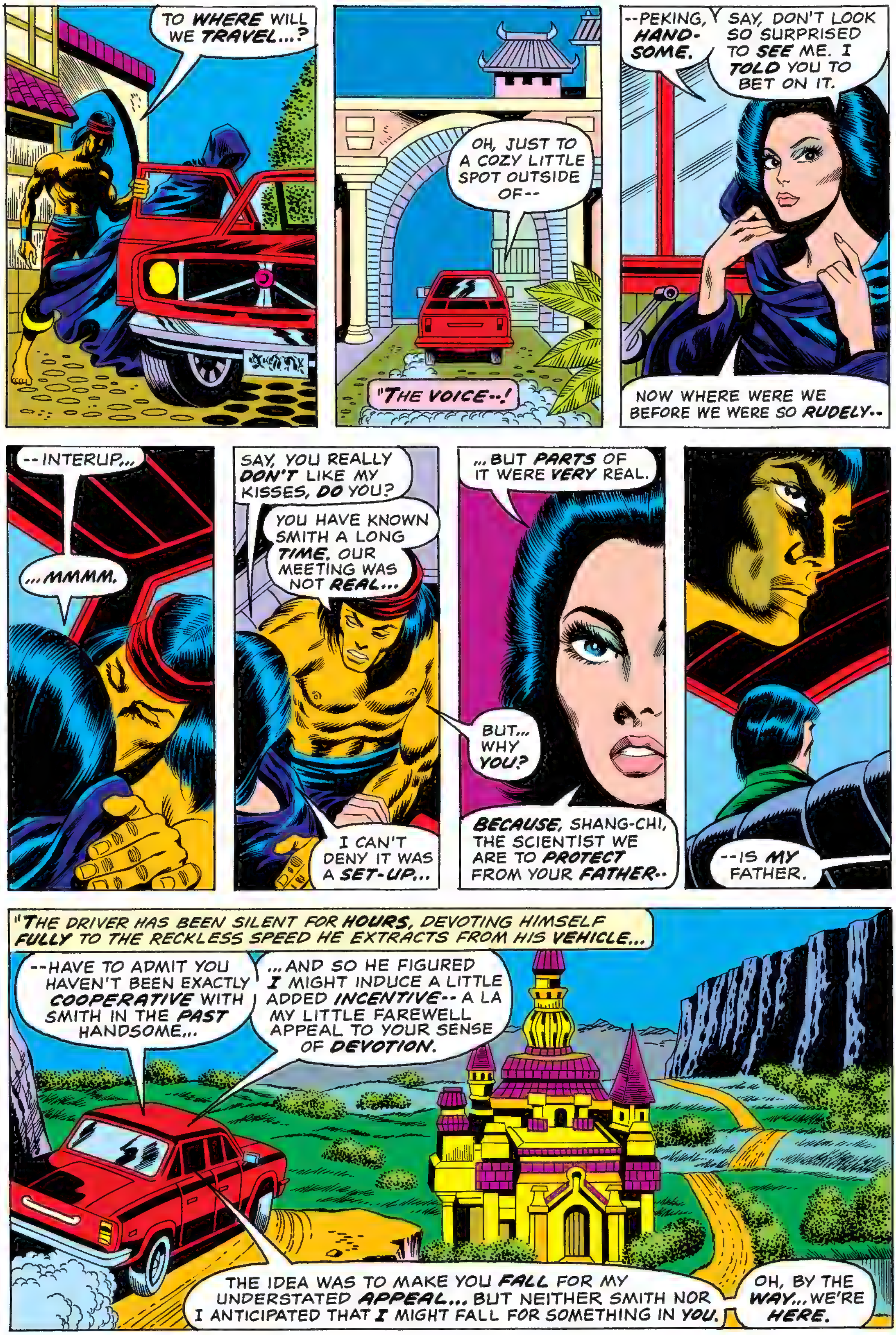

"THE NIGHT AIR IS CHILL...
"...BUT UNNOTICED BY THE FIRE WHICH BUILDS WITHIN ME.
"I LISTEN TO THE SOFT SOUNDS OF DEATH AWAKENING...
"...LIKE VERMIN SLITHERING FROM FILTH...
"...BUT I DO NOT PAUSE.
"SMITH'S LIAISON AGENT AWAITS ME AT THE PRESCRIBED LOCATION.
"I MUST APPROACH THAT LOCATION...
"...UNTIL I AM FORCED TO PAUSE, AND STAND LIKE A SINGLE BLADE OF GRASS--
"--AMIDST A HARVEST OF DEATH.
STAND, SHANG-CHI--
--AND PREPARE TO LEAVE THIS LIFE.

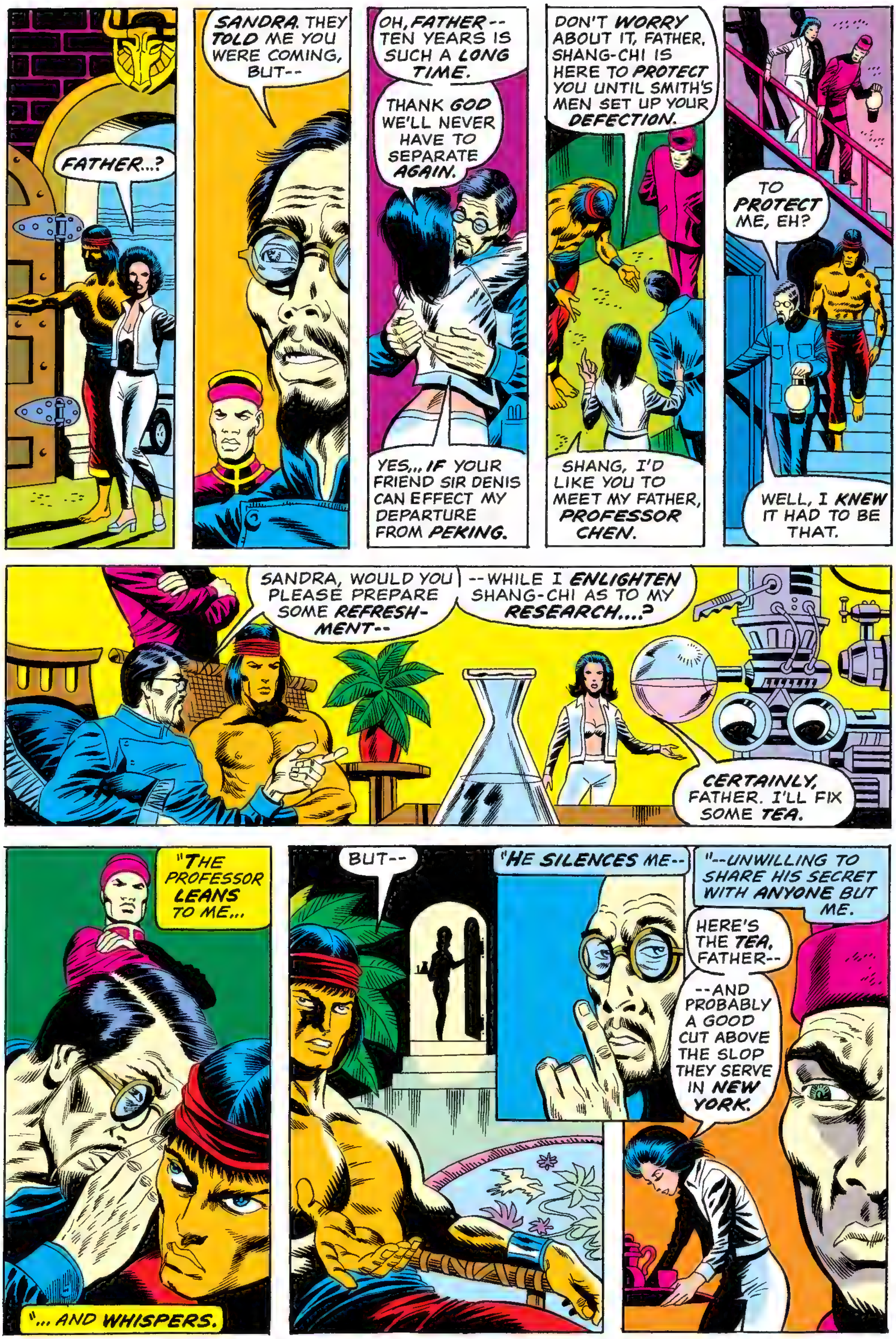

"I FALL TO A CROUCH, SLIDING THE NUNCHAKU STICKS FROM MY SASH.
"I HAVE COME TO REJECT WEAPONS AS CRUTCHES FIT ONLY FOR THOSE WEAK IN BODY AND SPIRIT... AND HAVE NOT TURNED TO THE NUNCHAKU SINCE FACING MIDNIGHT, HE WHO HAD BEEN MY BROTHER M'NAI...*
"...BUT EVEN THOUGH THEY ARE A GIFT WHICH PROFANES THE ACT OF GIVING...
"...I HAVE ACCEPTED THEM AS NECESSARY.
MADNESS RULES HIS SPIRIT--!
HE WOULD OPPOSE US ALL!!
*SPECIAL MARVEL EDITION #16.--ROY.
"AND THIS FACT, FAR MORE THAN THE ASSASSINS THEMSELVES--
"--FILLS--
"--ME--
"--WITH--
"--ANGER.
HI!EEEE!!

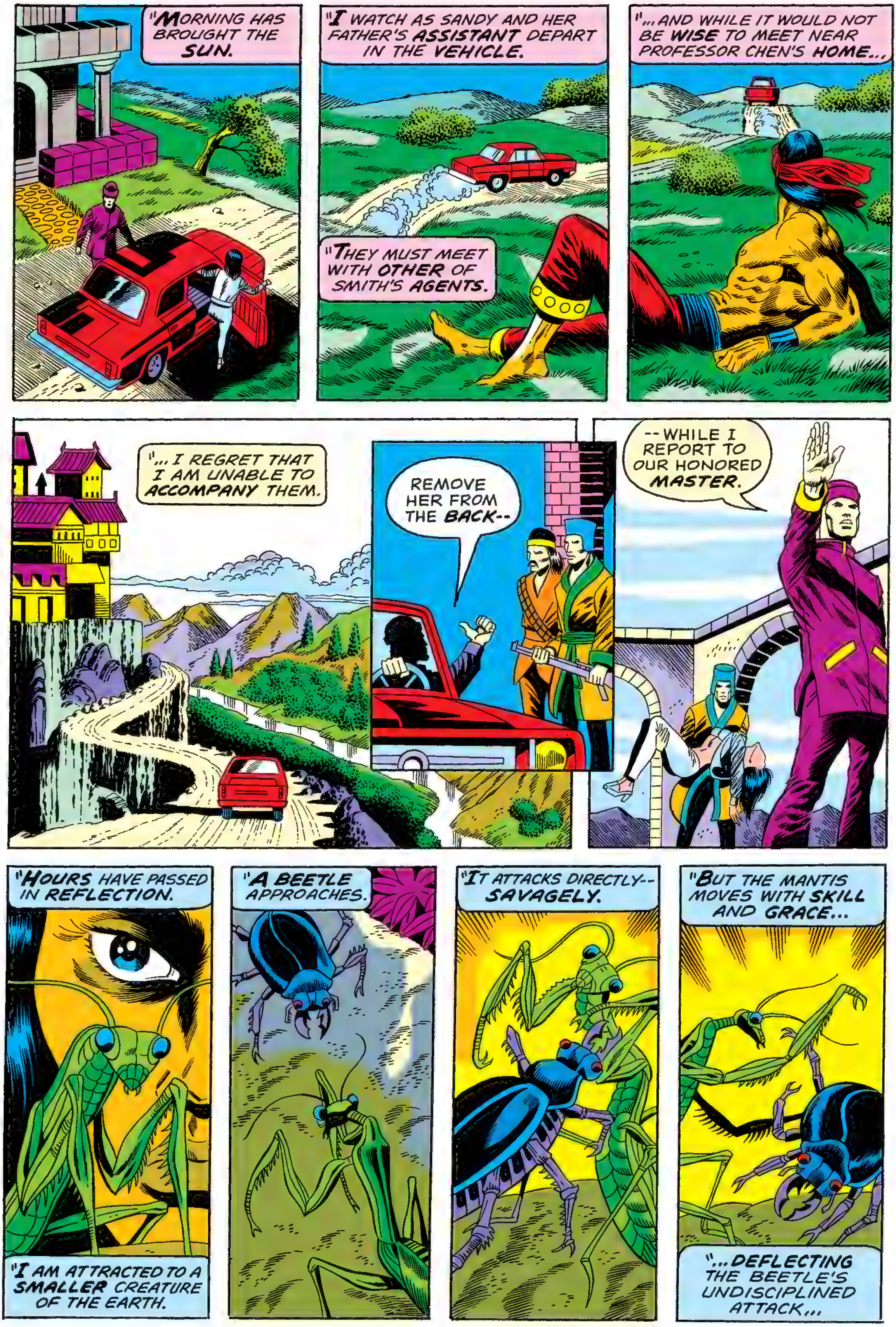

"I MUST RELEASE THAT ANGER--
KRAK
KRUK
"--BEFORE IT DESTROYS ME.
CHLAK
QUICKLY--HURL YOUR SPEAR WHILE HIS BACK IS TURNED!!
SHWAK
HIS SPEED--! IT IS NOT HUMAN!!
HWOK!
HE IS HUMAN--! AND HE IS ONLY ONE, WHILE ARE--
CHU

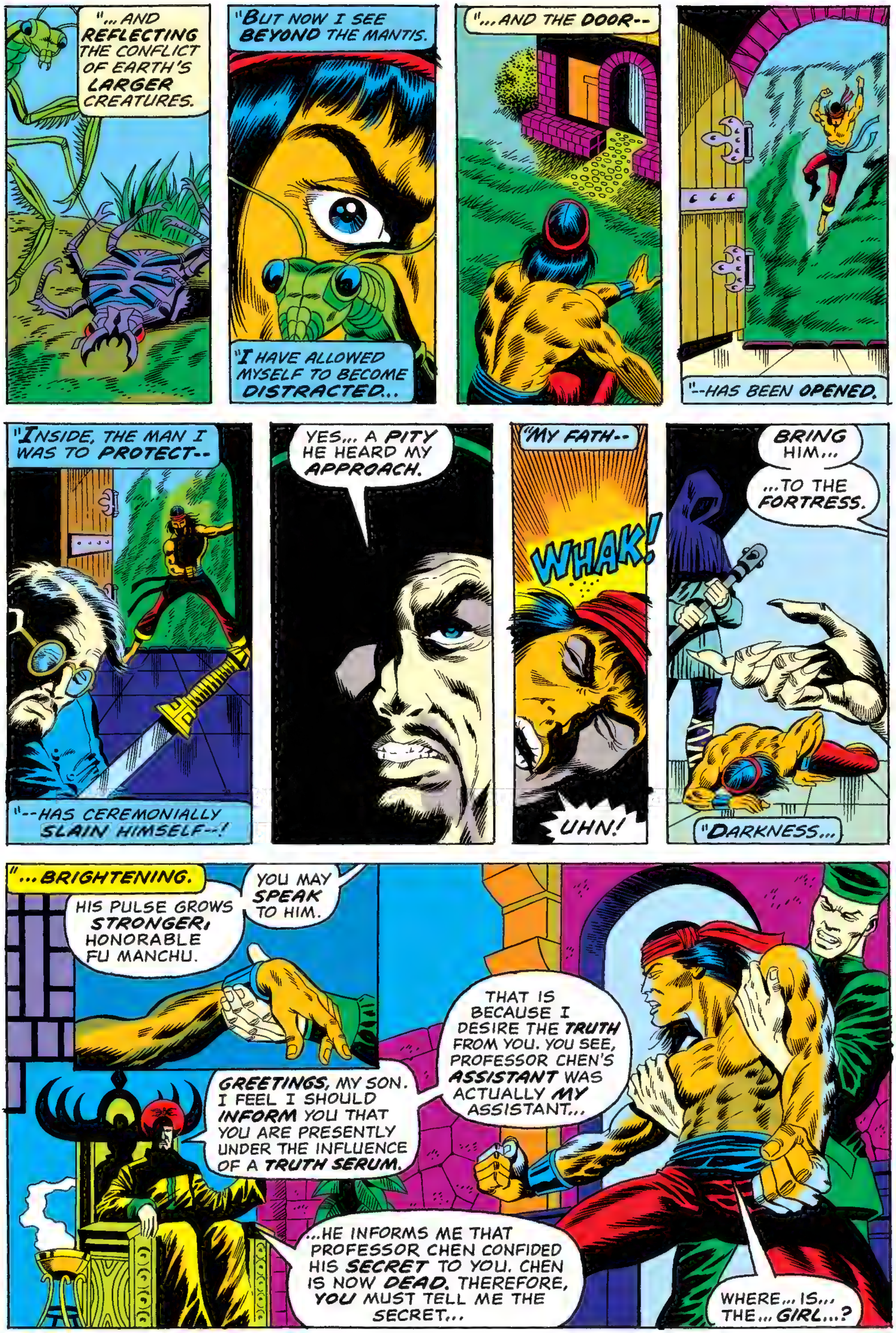

FWAK
CHANG
FUP
--MAG-KK!!
"A NUMBER OF THE ASSASSINS BEGIN FLEEING NOW, PREFERRING TO FACE MY FATHER RATHER THAN THE FURY WHICH FILLS ME. OTHERS FALL, CLEARING THE PATH OF MY SIGHT... AND I AM ABLE TO SEE TO THE MOUTH OF THIS ALLEY...
"...WHERE A SMALL CROWD OF CITIZENS HAS GATHERED. THEY ARE MUCH LIKE THOSE WHO INHABIT THE PLACE CALLED NEW YORK...
STOP HIM, SAMURAI! WE ARE THE ONLY TWO LEFT--!
BUT MY SWORD--!
"...FOR THEY MAKE NO MOVE TO INTERFERE IN AN ACT OF VIOLENCE...
THRAK
KLUD
"...AND THEY SHRINK FROM HE WHO HAS DEMONSTRATED THE GREATEST STRENGTH.
"I PASS THEM...
"...AND THE NIGHT AGAIN GROWS CHILL AS I RESUME THE PATH TO MY DESTINATION.
"I HAVE BEEN DETAINED FOR SEVERAL MINUTES, A CRITICAL LENGTH OF TIME FOR SMITH'S LIAISON AGENT TO SPEND IN THESE STREETS FILLED WITH MY FATHER'S ASSASSINS.

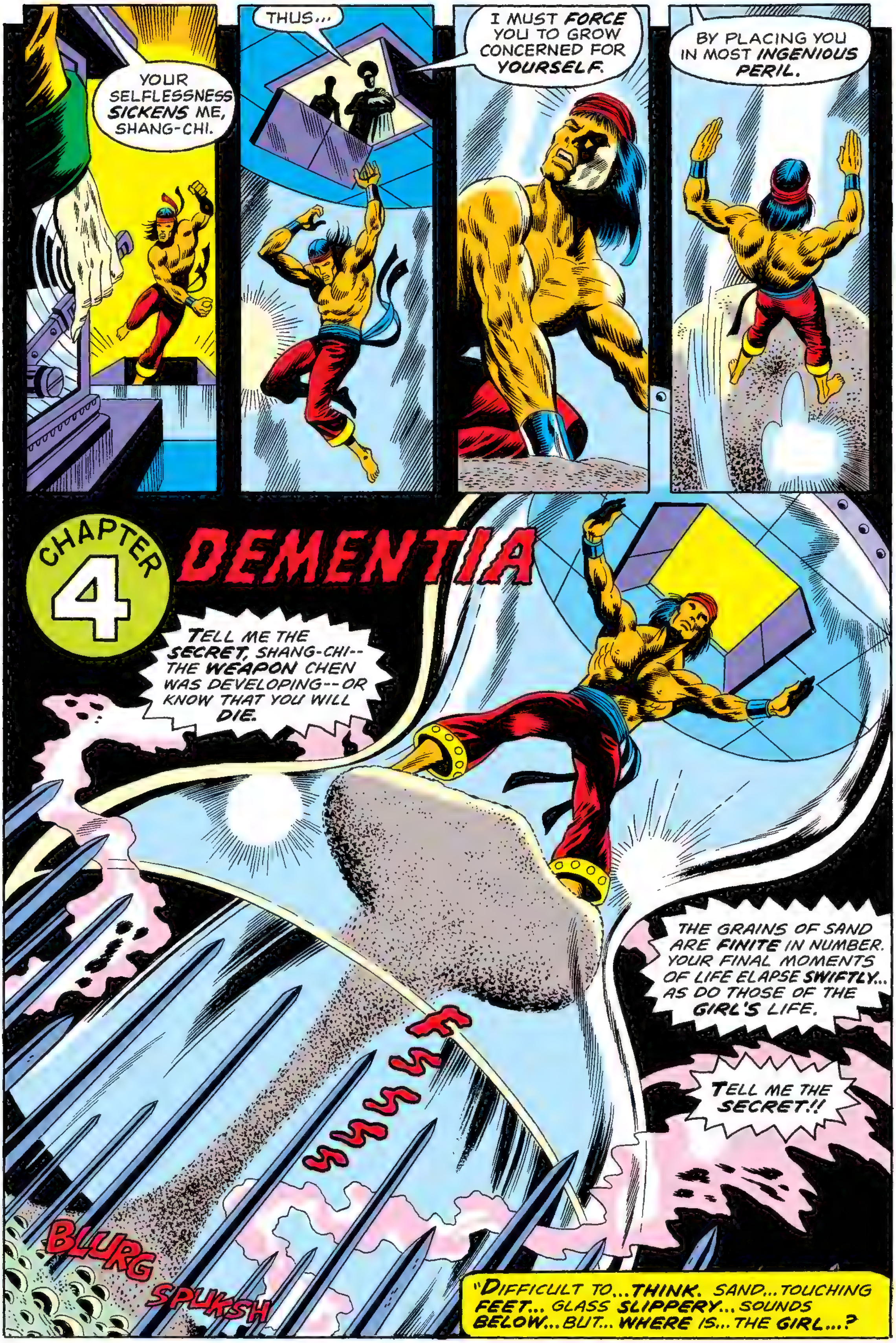

"...ASSASSINS WHO WOULD SEEM AS **NUMBERLESS** AS THOSE WHO REFUSE TO INTERFERE IN ACTS OF **VIOLENCE**.
"ALTHOUGH THE HEAT OF CONFLICT **REMAINS** WITH ME, THE AIR ONCE MORE GROWS **CHILL**. BUT MY THOUGHTS ARE **ELSEWHERE**.
"...AND FOR A MOMENT THERE IS **MAGIC** IN THIS NIGHT...
"...FLOATING...
"...IN THE...
"...AIR.
"I HAVE REACHED THE **RENDEZVOUS POINT**, BUT THERE IS NO ONE--
PSSST!
"I FOLLOW, AND AS THE ROBED AGENT PASSES THROUGH AN ANCIENT **ARCHWAY**...
"...I AM REMINDED OF THE **DISTANCE** WHICH SEPARATES ME FROM A SIMPLE **PARK BENCH**.

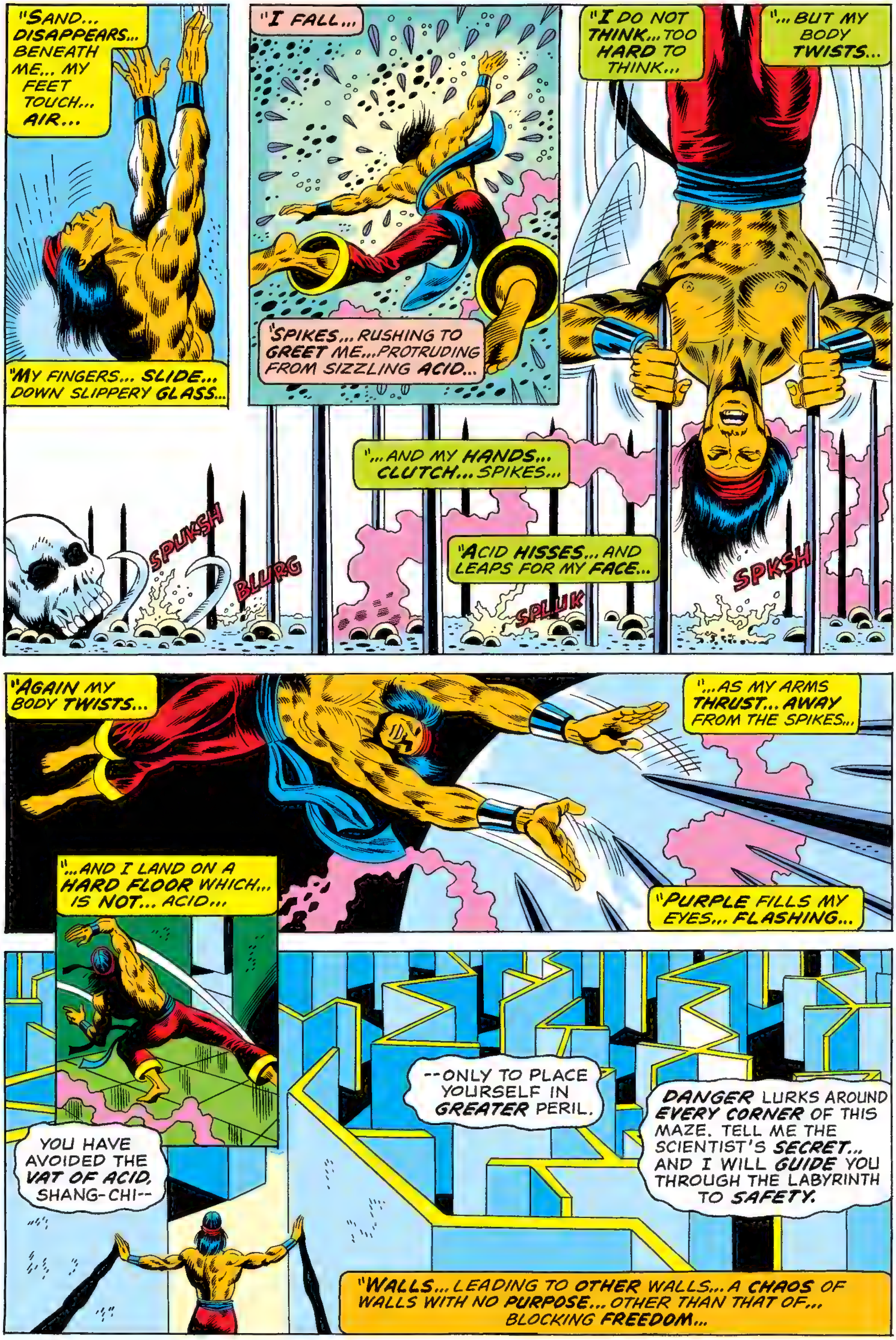

TO WHERE WILL WE TRAVEL...?
OH, JUST TO A COZY LITTLE SPOT OUTSIDE OF--
"THE VOICE--!
--PEKING, HANDSOME.
SAY, DON'T LOOK SO SURPRISED TO SEE ME. I TOLD YOU TO BET ON IT.
NOW WHERE WERE WE BEFORE WE WERE SO RUDELY--
--INTERUP...
...MMMM.
SAY, YOU REALLY DON'T LIKE MY KISSES, DO YOU?
YOU HAVE KNOWN SMITH A LONG TIME. OUR MEETING WAS NOT REAL...
I CAN'T DENY IT WAS A SET-UP...
...BUT PARTS OF IT WERE VERY REAL.
BUT... WHY YOU?
BECAUSE, SHANG-CHI, THE SCIENTIST WE ARE TO PROTECT FROM YOUR FATHER--
--IS MY FATHER.
"THE DRIVER HAS BEEN SILENT FOR HOURS, DEVOTING HIMSELF FULLY TO THE RECKLESS SPEED HE EXTRACTS FROM HIS VEHICLE...
--HAVE TO ADMIT YOU HAVEN'T BEEN EXACTLY COOPERATIVE WITH SMITH IN THE PAST HANDSOME...
...AND SO HE FIGURED I MIGHT INDUCE A LITTLE ADDED INCENTIVE-- A LA MY LITTLE FAREWELL APPEAL TO YOUR SENSE OF DEVOTION.
THE IDEA WAS TO MAKE YOU FALL FOR MY UNDERSTATED APPEAL... BUT NEITHER SMITH NOR I ANTICIPATED THAT I MIGHT FALL FOR SOMETHING IN YOU.
OH, BY THE WAY... WE'RE HERE.

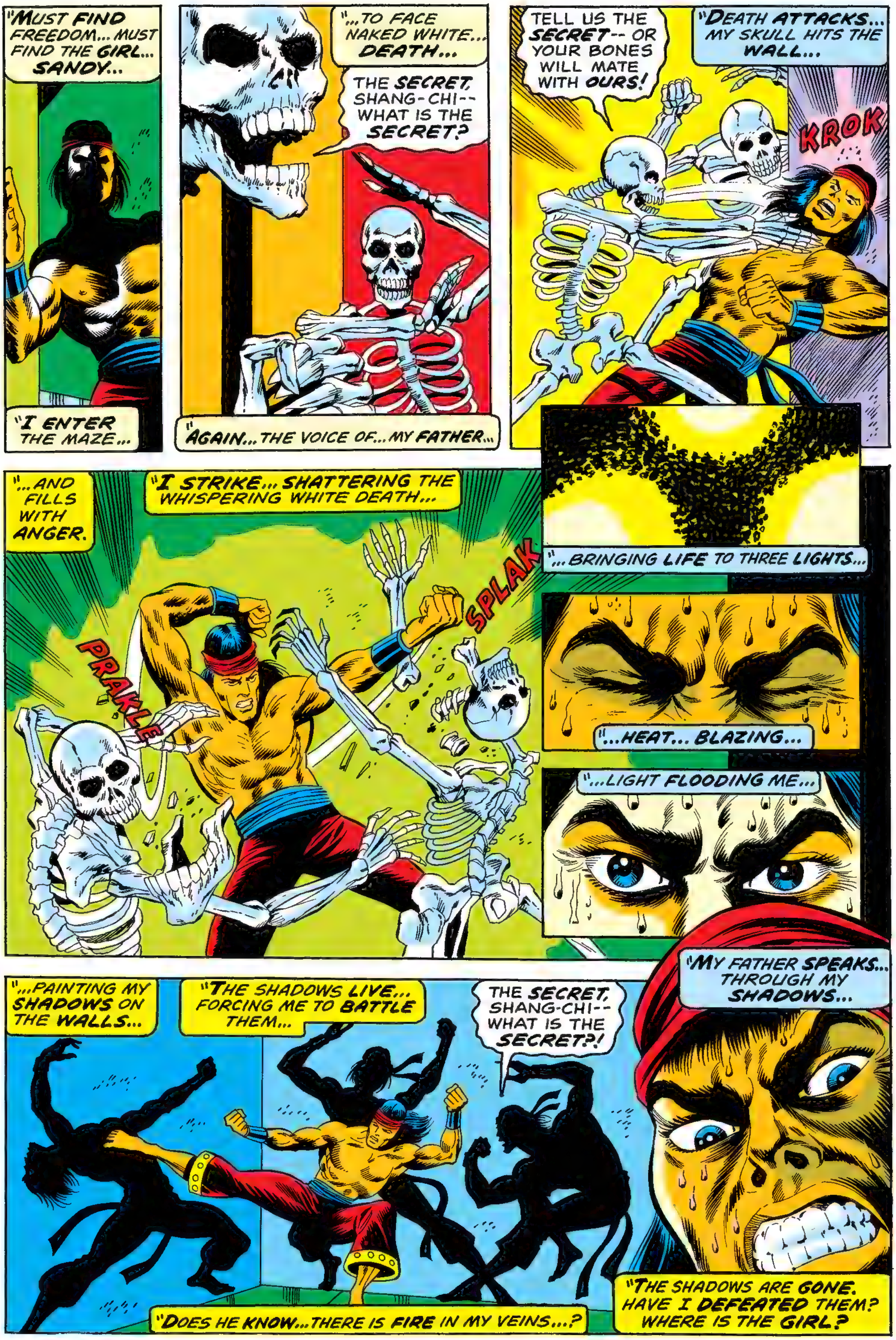

FATHER...?
SANDRA. THEY TOLD ME YOU WERE COMING, BUT--
OH, FATHER-- TEN YEARS IS SUCH A LONG TIME.
THANK GOD WE'LL NEVER HAVE TO SEPARATE AGAIN.
YES... IF YOUR FRIEND SIR DENIS CAN EFFECT MY DEPARTURE FROM PEKING.
DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT, FATHER. SHANG-CHI IS HERE TO PROTECT YOU UNTIL SMITH'S MEN SET UP YOUR DEFECTION.
SHANG, I'D LIKE YOU TO MEET MY FATHER, PROFESSOR CHEN.
TO PROTECT ME, EH?
WELL, I KNEW IT HAD TO BE THAT.
SANDRA, WOULD YOU PLEASE PREPARE SOME REFRESHMENT--
--WHILE I ENLIGHTEN SHANG-CHI AS TO MY RESEARCH...?
CERTAINLY, FATHER. I'LL FIX SOME TEA.
"THE PROFESSOR LEANS TO ME...
"... AND WHISPERS.
BUT--
"HE SILENCES ME--
"--UNWILLING TO SHARE HIS SECRET WITH ANYONE BUT ME.
HERE'S THE TEA, FATHER--
--AND PROBABLY A GOOD CUT ABOVE THE SLOP THEY SERVE IN NEW YORK.

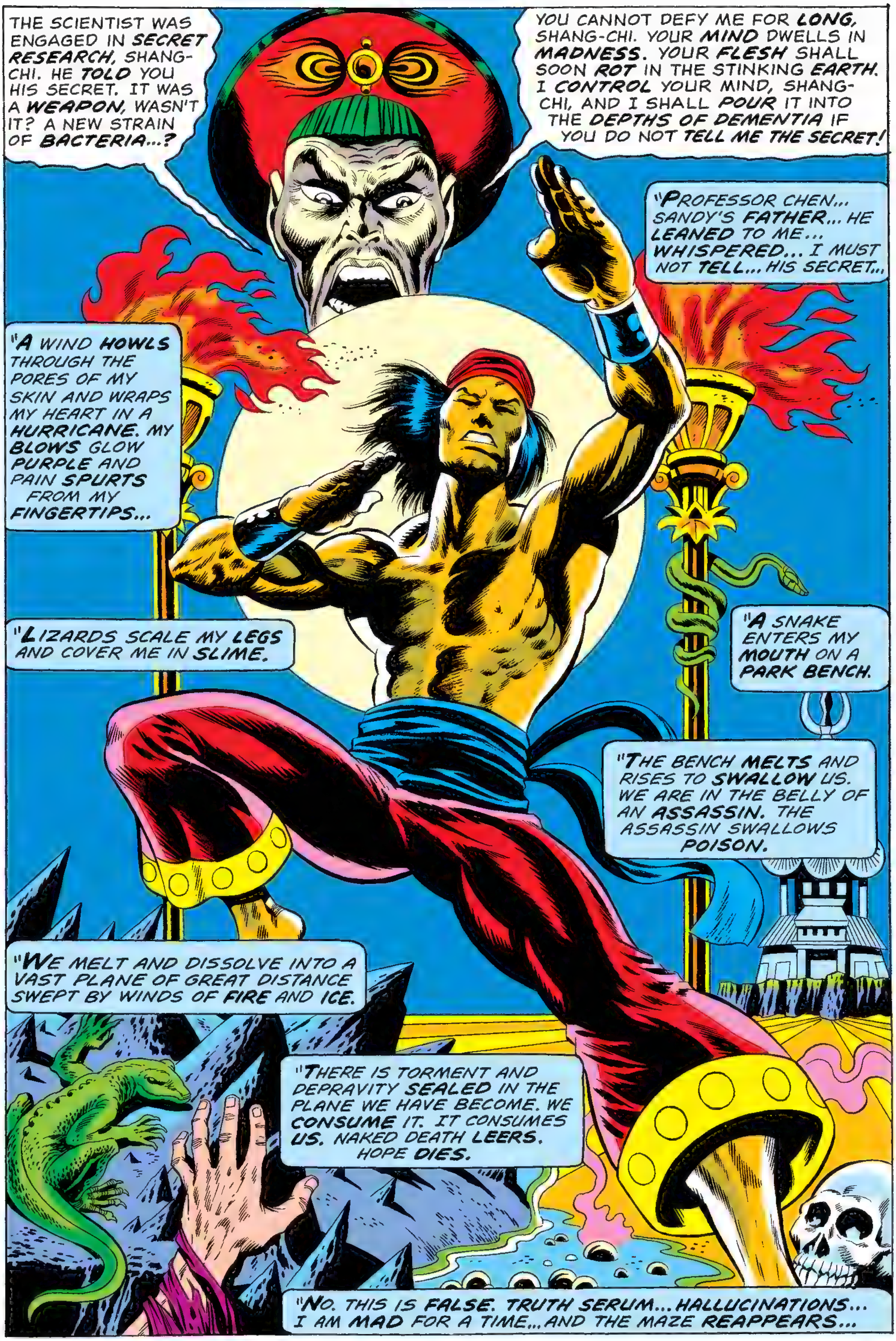

"MORNING HAS BROUGHT THE SUN.
"I WATCH AS SANDY AND HER FATHER'S ASSISTANT DEPART IN THE VEHICLE.
"THEY MUST MEET WITH OTHER OF SMITH'S AGENTS.
"...AND WHILE IT WOULD NOT BE WISE TO MEET NEAR PROFESSOR CHEN'S HOME...
"...I REGRET THAT I AM UNABLE TO ACCOMPANY THEM.
REMOVE HER FROM THE BACK--
--WHILE I REPORT TO OUR HONORED MASTER.
"HOURS HAVE PASSED IN REFLECTION.
"I AM ATTRACTED TO A SMALLER CREATURE OF THE EARTH.
"A BEETLE APPROACHES.
"IT ATTACKS DIRECTLY-- SAVAGELY.
"BUT THE MANTIS MOVES WITH SKILL AND GRACE...
"...DEFLECTING THE BEETLE'S UNDISCIPLINED ATTACK...

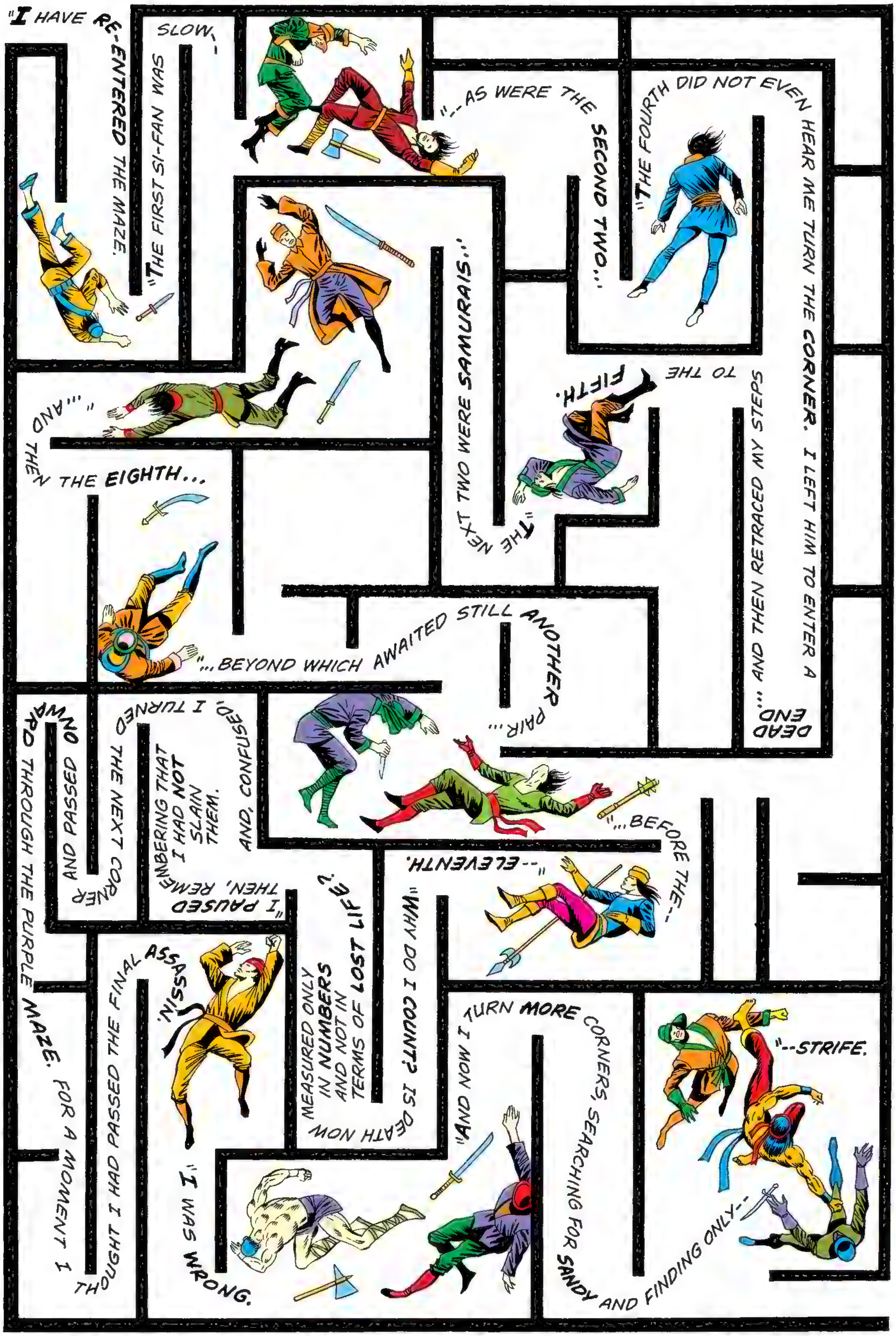

"...AND REFLECTING THE CONFLICT OF EARTH'S LARGER CREATURES.
"BUT NOW I SEE BEYOND THE MANTIS.
"I HAVE ALLOWED MYSELF TO BECOME DISTRACTED...
"...AND THE DOOR--
"--HAS BEEN OPENED.
"INSIDE, THE MAN I WAS TO PROTECT--
"--HAS CEREMONIALLY SLAIN HIMSELF--!
YES... A PITY HE HEARD MY APPROACH.
"MY FATH--
WHAK!
UHN!
BRING HIM...
...TO THE FORTRESS.
"DARKNESS...
"...BRIGHTENING.
HIS PULSE GROWS STRONGER, HONORABLE FU MANCHU.
YOU MAY SPEAK TO HIM.
GREETINGS, MY SON. I FEEL I SHOULD INFORM YOU THAT YOU ARE PRESENTLY UNDER THE INFLUENCE OF A TRUTH SERUM.
THAT IS BECAUSE I DESIRE THE TRUTH FROM YOU. YOU SEE, PROFESSOR CHEN'S ASSISTANT WAS ACTUALLY MY ASSISTANT...
...HE INFORMS ME THAT PROFESSOR CHEN CONFIDED HIS SECRET TO YOU. CHEN IS NOW DEAD. THEREFORE, YOU MUST TELL ME THE SECRET...
WHERE... IS... THE... GIRL...?

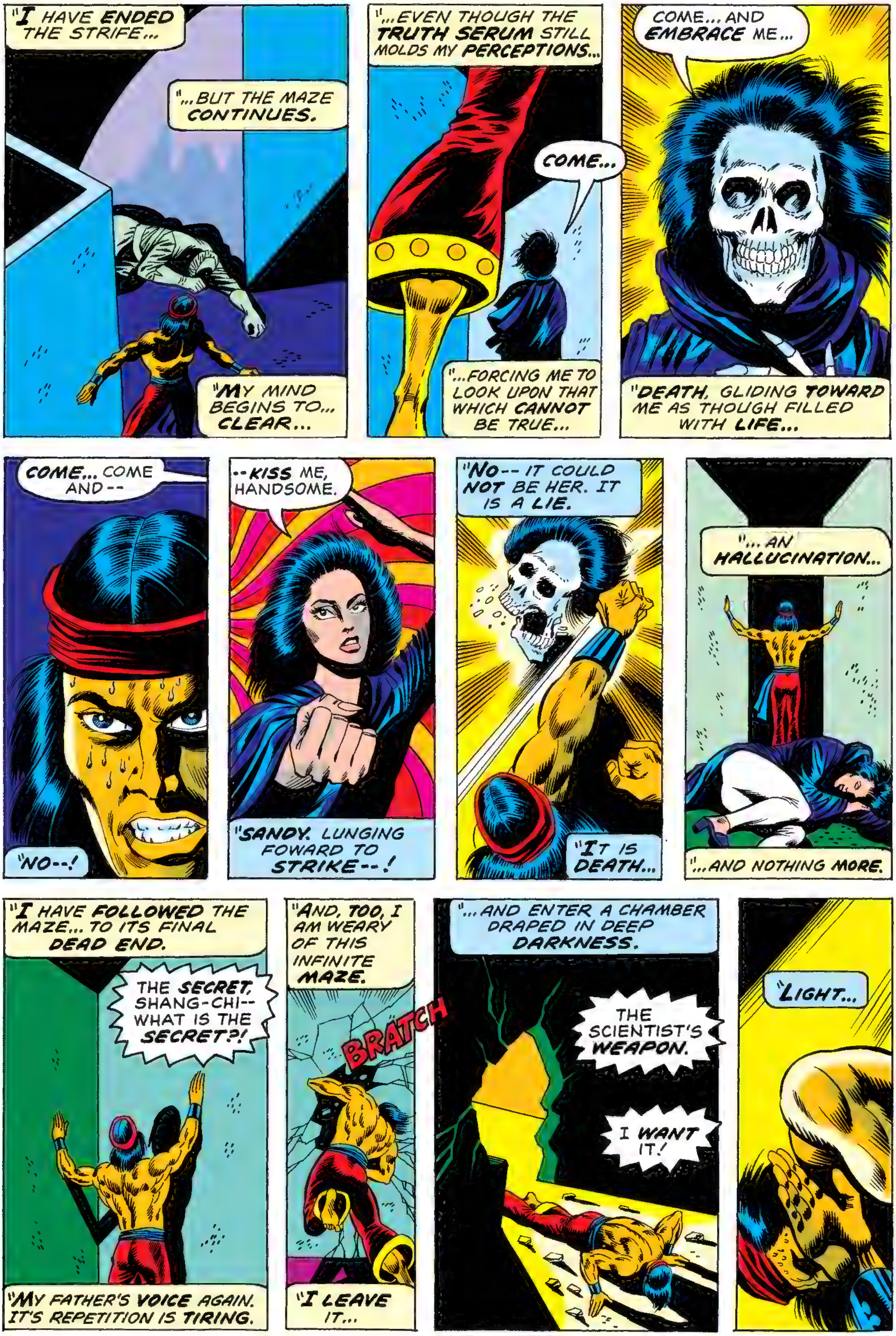

YOUR SELFLESSNESS SICKENS ME, SHANG-CHI.
THUS...
I MUST FORCE YOU TO GROW CONCERNED FOR YOURSELF.
BY PLACING YOU IN MOST INGENIOUS PERIL.
CHAPTER 4
DEMENTIA
TELL ME THE SECRET, SHANG-CHI-- THE WEAPON CHEN WAS DEVELOPING--OR KNOW THAT YOU WILL DIE.
THE GRAINS OF SAND ARE FINITE IN NUMBER. YOUR FINAL MOMENTS OF LIFE ELAPSE SWIFTLY... AS DO THOSE OF THE GIRL'S LIFE.
TELL ME THE SECRET!!
SHHHHF
BLURG
SPLKSH
"DIFFICULT TO...THINK. SAND...TOUCHING FEET... GLASS SLIPPERY... SOUNDS BELOW...BUT... WHERE IS...THE GIRL...?

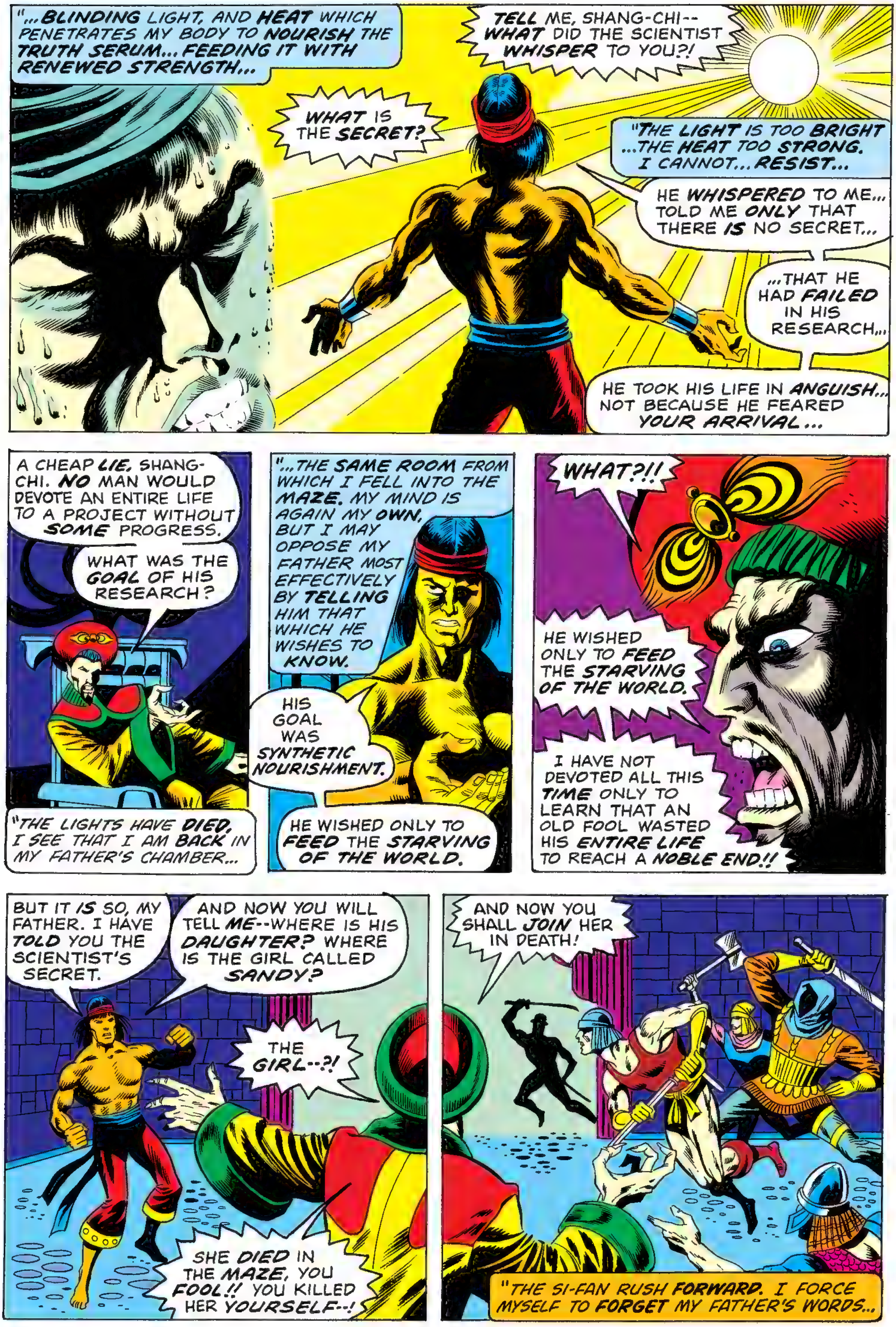

"SAND... DISAPPEARS... BENEATH ME... MY FEET TOUCH... AIR...
"MY FINGERS... SLIDE... DOWN SLIPPERY GLASS...
"I FALL...
"SPIKES... RUSHING TO GREET ME... PROTRUDING FROM SIZZLING ACID...
"I DO NOT THINK... TOO HARD TO THINK...
"... BUT MY BODY TWISTS...
"... AND MY HANDS... CLUTCH... SPIKES...
"ACID HISSES... AND LEAPS FOR MY FACE...
SPLUKSH
BLURG
SPLUK
SPKSH
"AGAIN MY BODY TWISTS...
"... AS MY ARMS THRUST... AWAY FROM THE SPIKES...
"... AND I LAND ON A HARD FLOOR WHICH... IS NOT... ACID...
"PURPLE FILLS MY EYES... FLASHING...
YOU HAVE AVOIDED THE VAT OF ACID, SHANG-CHI--
--ONLY TO PLACE YOURSELF IN GREATER PERIL.
DANGER LURKS AROUND EVERY CORNER OF THIS MAZE. TELL ME THE SCIENTIST'S SECRET... AND I WILL GUIDE YOU THROUGH THE LABYRINTH TO SAFETY.
"WALLS... LEADING TO OTHER WALLS... A CHAOS OF WALLS WITH NO PURPOSE... OTHER THAN THAT OF... BLOCKING FREEDOM...

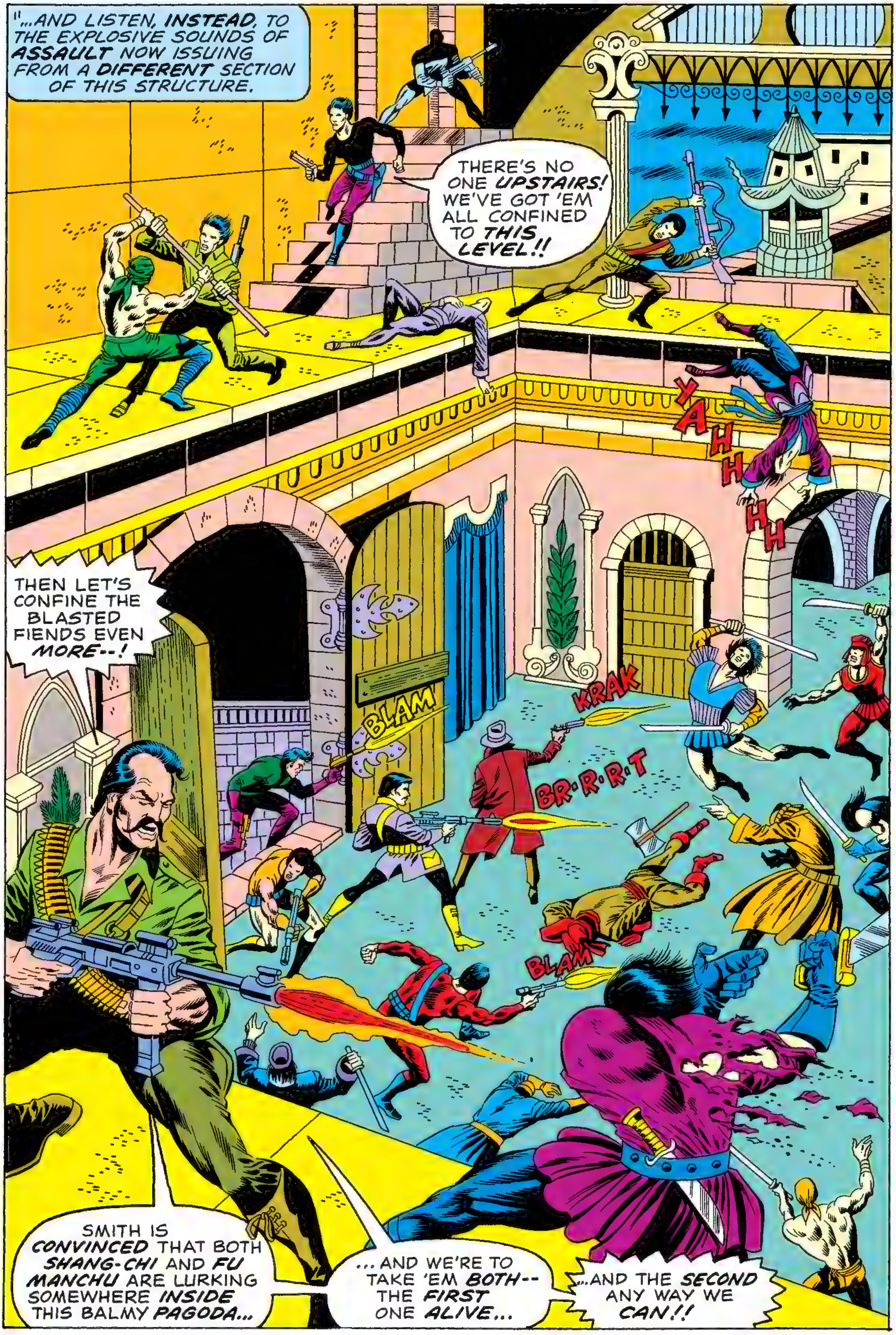

"MUST FIND FREEDOM... MUST FIND THE GIRL... SANDY...
"I ENTER THE MAZE...
"...TO FACE NAKED WHITE... DEATH...
THE SECRET, SHANG-CHI-- WHAT IS THE SECRET?
"AGAIN... THE VOICE OF... MY FATHER...
TELL US THE SECRET-- OR YOUR BONES WILL MATE WITH OURS!
"DEATH ATTACKS... MY SKULL HITS THE WALL...
KROK
"...AND FILLS WITH ANGER.
"I STRIKE... SHATTERING THE WHISPERING WHITE DEATH...
PRAKLE
SPLAK
"...BRINGING LIFE TO THREE LIGHTS...
"...HEAT... BLAZING...
"...LIGHT FLOODING ME...
"MY FATHER SPEAKS... THROUGH MY SHADOWS...
"...PAINTING MY SHADOWS ON THE WALLS...
"THE SHADOWS LIVE... FORCING ME TO BATTLE THEM...
THE SECRET, SHANG-CHI-- WHAT IS THE SECRET?!
"DOES HE KNOW... THERE IS FIRE IN MY VEINS...?
"THE SHADOWS ARE GONE. HAVE I DEFEATED THEM? WHERE IS THE GIRL?

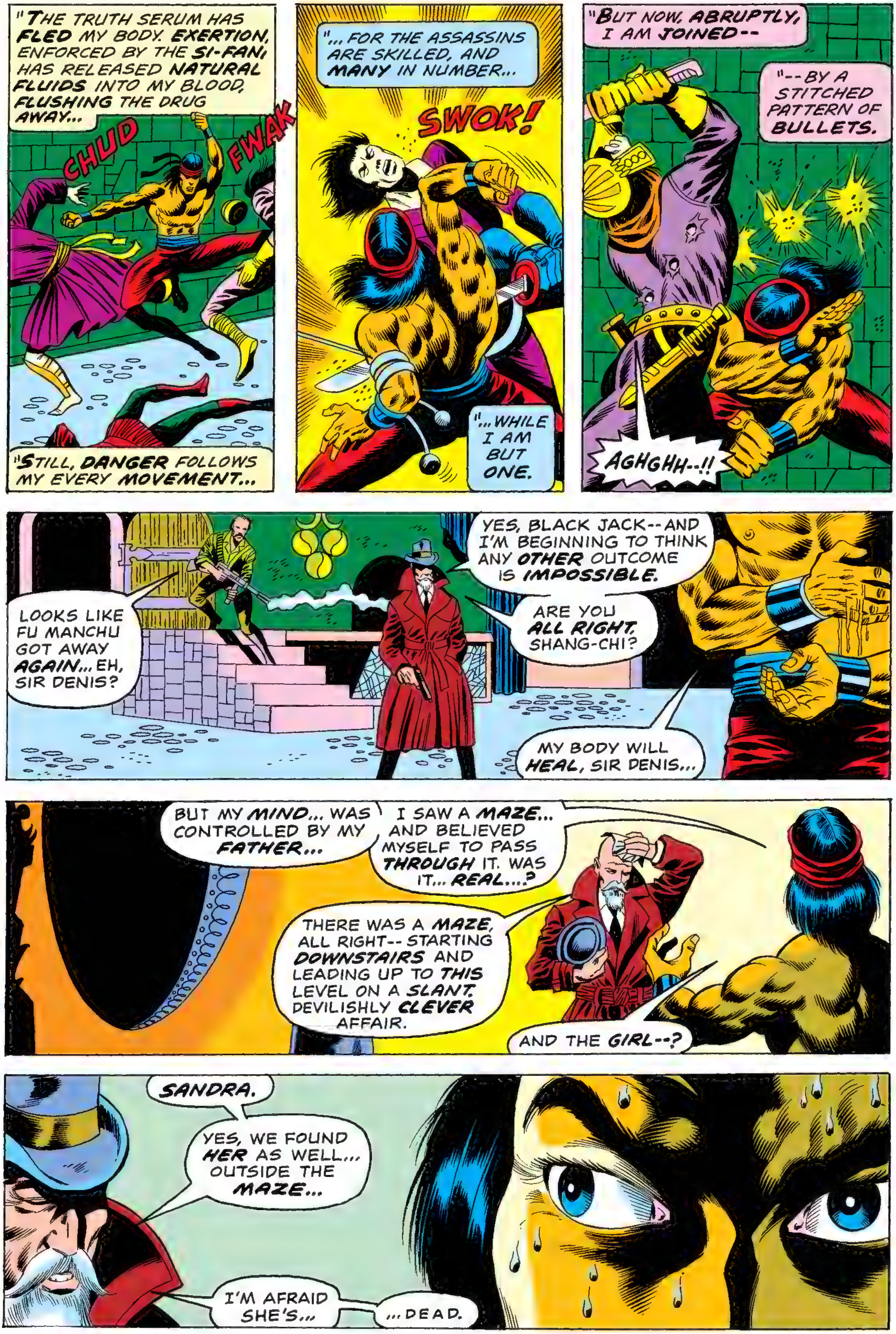

THE SCIENTIST WAS ENGAGED IN SECRET RESEARCH, SHANG-CHI. HE TOLD YOU HIS SECRET. IT WAS A WEAPON, WASN'T IT? A NEW STRAIN OF BACTERIA...?
YOU CANNOT DEFY ME FOR LONG, SHANG-CHI. YOUR MIND DWELLS IN MADNESS. YOUR FLESH SHALL SOON ROT IN THE STINKING EARTH. I CONTROL YOUR MIND, SHANG-CHI, AND I SHALL POUR IT INTO THE DEPTHS OF DEMENTIA IF YOU DO NOT TELL ME THE SECRET!
"PROFESSOR CHEN... SANDY'S FATHER... HE LEANED TO ME... WHISPERED... I MUST NOT TELL... HIS SECRET...
"A WIND HOWLS THROUGH THE PORES OF MY SKIN AND WRAPS MY HEART IN A HURRICANE. MY BLOWS GLOW PURPLE AND PAIN SPURTS FROM MY FINGERTIPS...
"LIZARDS SCALE MY LEGS AND COVER ME IN SLIME.
"A SNAKE ENTERS MY MOUTH ON A PARK BENCH.
"THE BENCH MELTS AND RISES TO SWALLOW US. WE ARE IN THE BELLY OF AN ASSASSIN. THE ASSASSIN SWALLOWS POISON.
"WE MELT AND DISSOLVE INTO A VAST PLANE OF GREAT DISTANCE SWEPT BY WINDS OF FIRE AND ICE.
"THERE IS TORMENT AND DEPRAVITY SEALED IN THE PLANE WE HAVE BECOME. WE CONSUME IT. IT CONSUMES US. NAKED DEATH LEERS. HOPE DIES.
"NO. THIS IS FALSE. TRUTH SERUM... HALLUCINATIONS... I AM MAD FOR A TIME... AND THE MAZE REAPPEARS...

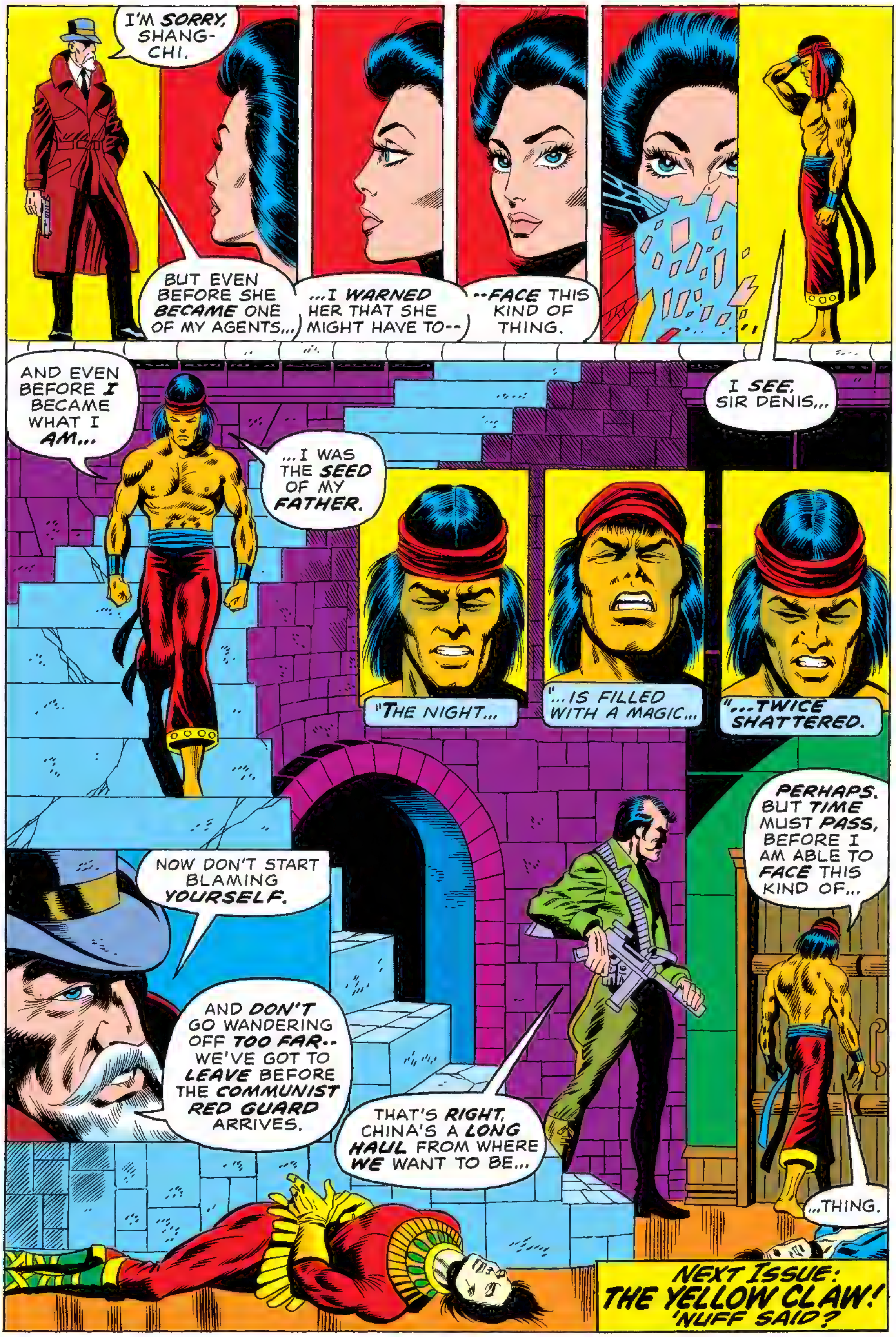

"I HAVE RE-ENTERED THE MAZE.
"THE FIRST SI-FAN WAS SLOW--
"--AS WERE THE SECOND TWO..."
"THE FOURTH DID NOT EVEN HEAR ME TURN THE CORNER. I LEFT HIM TO ENTER A DEAD END
...AND THEN RETRACED MY STEPS TO THE FIFTH.
"THE NEXT TWO WERE SAMURAIS..."
"...AND THEN THE EIGHTH...
"...BEYOND WHICH AWAITED STILL ANOTHER PAIR...
"...BEFORE THE--
"--ELEVENTH.
"WHY DO I COUNT? IS DEATH NOW MEASURED ONLY IN NUMBERS AND NOT IN TERMS OF LOST LIFE?
"I PAUSED THEN, REMEMBERING THAT I HAD NOT SLAIN THEM.
AND, CONFUSED, I TURNED THE NEXT CORNER AND PASSED ONWARD THROUGH THE PURPLE MAZE. FOR A MOMENT I THOUGHT I HAD PASSED THE FINAL ASSASSIN.
"I WAS WRONG.
"AND NOW I TURN MORE CORNERS, SEARCHING FOR SANDY AND FINDING ONLY--
"--STRIFE.

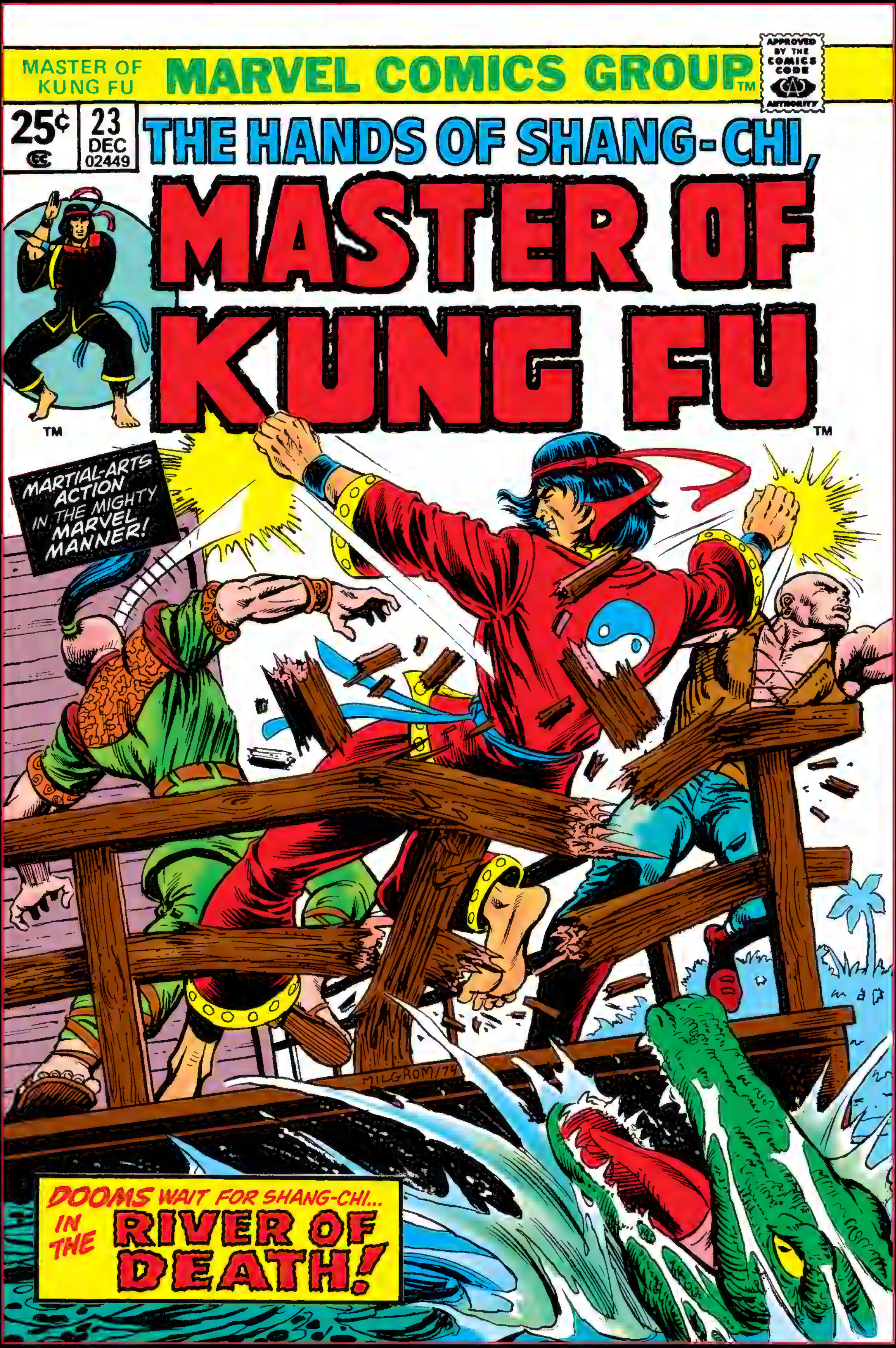

"I HAVE ENDED THE STRIFE...
"...BUT THE MAZE CONTINUES.
"MY MIND BEGINS TO... CLEAR...
"...EVEN THOUGH THE TRUTH SERUM STILL MOLDS MY PERCEPTIONS...
COME...
"...FORCING ME TO LOOK UPON THAT WHICH CANNOT BE TRUE...
COME... AND EMBRACE ME...
"DEATH, GLIDING TOWARD ME AS THOUGH FILLED WITH LIFE...
COME... COME AND --
"NO--!
--KISS ME, HANDSOME.
"SANDY, LUNGING FOWARD TO STRIKE--!
"NO-- IT COULD NOT BE HER. IT IS A LIE.
"IT IS DEATH...
"... AN HALLUCINATION...
"...AND NOTHING MORE.
"I HAVE FOLLOWED THE MAZE... TO ITS FINAL DEAD END.
THE SECRET, SHANG-CHI-- WHAT IS THE SECRET?!
"MY FATHER'S VOICE AGAIN. IT'S REPETITION IS TIRING.
"AND, TOO, I AM WEARY OF THIS INFINITE MAZE.
BRATCH
"I LEAVE IT...
"...AND ENTER A CHAMBER DRAPED IN DEEP DARKNESS.
THE SCIENTIST'S WEAPON.
I WANT IT!
"LIGHT...


"...BLINDING LIGHT, AND HEAT WHICH PENETRATES MY BODY TO NOURISH THE TRUTH SERUM... FEEDING IT WITH RENEWED STRENGTH...
TELL ME, SHANG-CHI-- WHAT DID THE SCIENTIST WHISPER TO YOU?!
WHAT IS THE SECRET?
"THE LIGHT IS TOO BRIGHT ...THE HEAT TOO STRONG. I CANNOT... RESIST...
HE WHISPERED TO ME... TOLD ME ONLY THAT THERE IS NO SECRET...
...THAT HE HAD FAILED IN HIS RESEARCH...
HE TOOK HIS LIFE IN ANGUISH... NOT BECAUSE HE FEARED YOUR ARRIVAL...
A CHEAP LIE, SHANG-CHI. NO MAN WOULD DEVOTE AN ENTIRE LIFE TO A PROJECT WITHOUT SOME PROGRESS.
WHAT WAS THE GOAL OF HIS RESEARCH?
"THE LIGHTS HAVE DIED, I SEE THAT I AM BACK IN MY FATHER'S CHAMBER...
"...THE SAME ROOM FROM WHICH I FELL INTO THE MAZE. MY MIND IS AGAIN MY OWN, BUT I MAY OPPOSE MY FATHER MOST EFFECTIVELY BY TELLING HIM THAT WHICH HE WISHES TO KNOW.
HIS GOAL WAS SYNTHETIC NOURISHMENT.
HE WISHED ONLY TO FEED THE STARVING OF THE WORLD.
WHAT?!!
HE WISHED ONLY TO FEED THE STARVING OF THE WORLD.
I HAVE NOT DEVOTED ALL THIS TIME ONLY TO LEARN THAT AN OLD FOOL WASTED HIS ENTIRE LIFE TO REACH A NOBLE END!!
BUT IT IS SO, MY FATHER. I HAVE TOLD YOU THE SCIENTIST'S SECRET.
AND NOW YOU WILL TELL ME--WHERE IS HIS DAUGHTER? WHERE IS THE GIRL CALLED SANDY?
THE GIRL--?!
SHE DIED IN THE MAZE, YOU FOOL!! YOU KILLED HER YOURSELF--!
AND NOW YOU SHALL JOIN HER IN DEATH!
"THE SI-FAN RUSH FORWARD. I FORCE MYSELF TO FORGET MY FATHER'S WORDS...


"...AND LISTEN, INSTEAD, TO THE EXPLOSIVE SOUNDS OF ASSAULT NOW ISSUING FROM A DIFFERENT SECTION OF THIS STRUCTURE.
THERE'S NO ONE UPSTAIRS! WE'VE GOT 'EM ALL CONFINED TO THIS LEVEL!!
YAHHHH
THEN LET'S CONFINE THE BLASTED FIENDS EVEN MORE--!
BLAM
KRAK
BR-R-R-T
BLAM
SMITH IS CONVINCED THAT BOTH SHANG-CHI AND FU MANCHU ARE LURKING SOMEWHERE INSIDE THIS BALMY PAGODA...
...AND WE'RE TO TAKE 'EM BOTH-- THE FIRST ONE ALIVE...
...AND THE SECOND ANY WAY WE CAN!!


"THE TRUTH SERUM HAS FLED MY BODY. EXERTION, ENFORCED BY THE SI-FAN, HAS RELEASED NATURAL FLUIDS INTO MY BLOOD, FLUSHING THE DRUG AWAY...
CHUD
FWAK
"STILL, DANGER FOLLOWS MY EVERY MOVEMENT...
"... FOR THE ASSASSINS ARE SKILLED, AND MANY IN NUMBER...
SWOK!
"... WHILE I AM BUT ONE.
"BUT NOW, ABRUPTLY, I AM JOINED--
"-- BY A STITCHED PATTERN OF BULLETS.
AGHGHH--!!
LOOKS LIKE FU MANCHU GOT AWAY AGAIN... EH, SIR DENIS?
YES, BLACK JACK--AND I'M BEGINNING TO THINK ANY OTHER OUTCOME IS IMPOSSIBLE.
ARE YOU ALL RIGHT, SHANG-CHI?
MY BODY WILL HEAL, SIR DENIS...
BUT MY MIND... WAS CONTROLLED BY MY FATHER...
I SAW A MAZE... AND BELIEVED MYSELF TO PASS THROUGH IT. WAS IT... REAL...?
THERE WAS A MAZE, ALL RIGHT-- STARTING DOWNSTAIRS AND LEADING UP TO THIS LEVEL ON A SLANT. DEVILISHLY CLEVER AFFAIR.
AND THE GIRL--?
SANDRA.
YES, WE FOUND HER AS WELL... OUTSIDE THE MAZE...
I'M AFRAID SHE'S...
... DEAD.


I'M SORRY, SHANG-CHI.
BUT EVEN BEFORE SHE BECAME ONE OF MY AGENTS...
...I WARNED HER THAT SHE MIGHT HAVE TO--
--FACE THIS KIND OF THING.
I SEE, SIR DENIS...
AND EVEN BEFORE I BECAME WHAT I AM...
...I WAS THE SEED OF MY FATHER.
"THE NIGHT...
"...IS FILLED WITH A MAGIC...
"...TWICE SHATTERED.
NOW DON'T START BLAMING YOURSELF.
AND DON'T GO WANDERING OFF TOO FAR-- WE'VE GOT TO LEAVE BEFORE THE COMMUNIST RED GUARD ARRIVES.
THAT'S RIGHT, CHINA'S A LONG HAUL FROM WHERE WE WANT TO BE...
PERHAPS. BUT TIME MUST PASS, BEFORE I AM ABLE TO FACE THIS KIND OF...
...THING.
NEXT ISSUE: THE YELLOW CLAW! 'NUFF SAID?


MASTER OF KUNG FU
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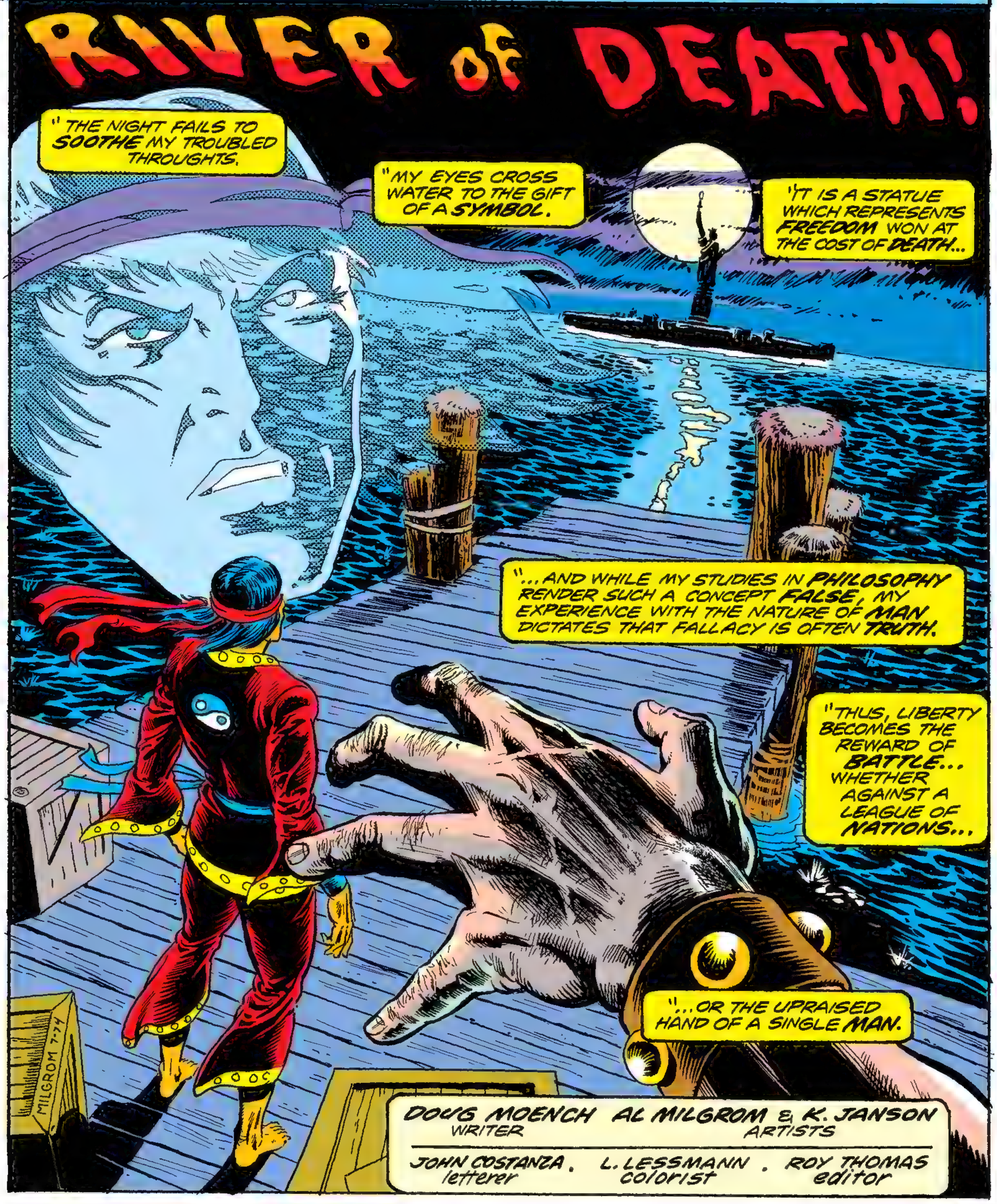
THE HANDS OF SHANG-CHI,
MASTER OF KUNG FU
™
™
MARTIAL-ARTS ACTION IN THE MIGHTY MARVEL MANNER!
MILGROM/74
DOOMS WAIT FOR SHANG-CHI... IN THE RIVER OF DEATH!

"Call me Shang-Chi, as my *father* did, when he raised me and molded my mind and my body in the vacuum of his Honan, China retreat. I learned many things from my father: That my name means "The Rising and Advancing of a Spirit," that my body could be forged into a living weapon through the discipline of kung fu, and that it might be used for the murder of a man called Dr. Petrie.

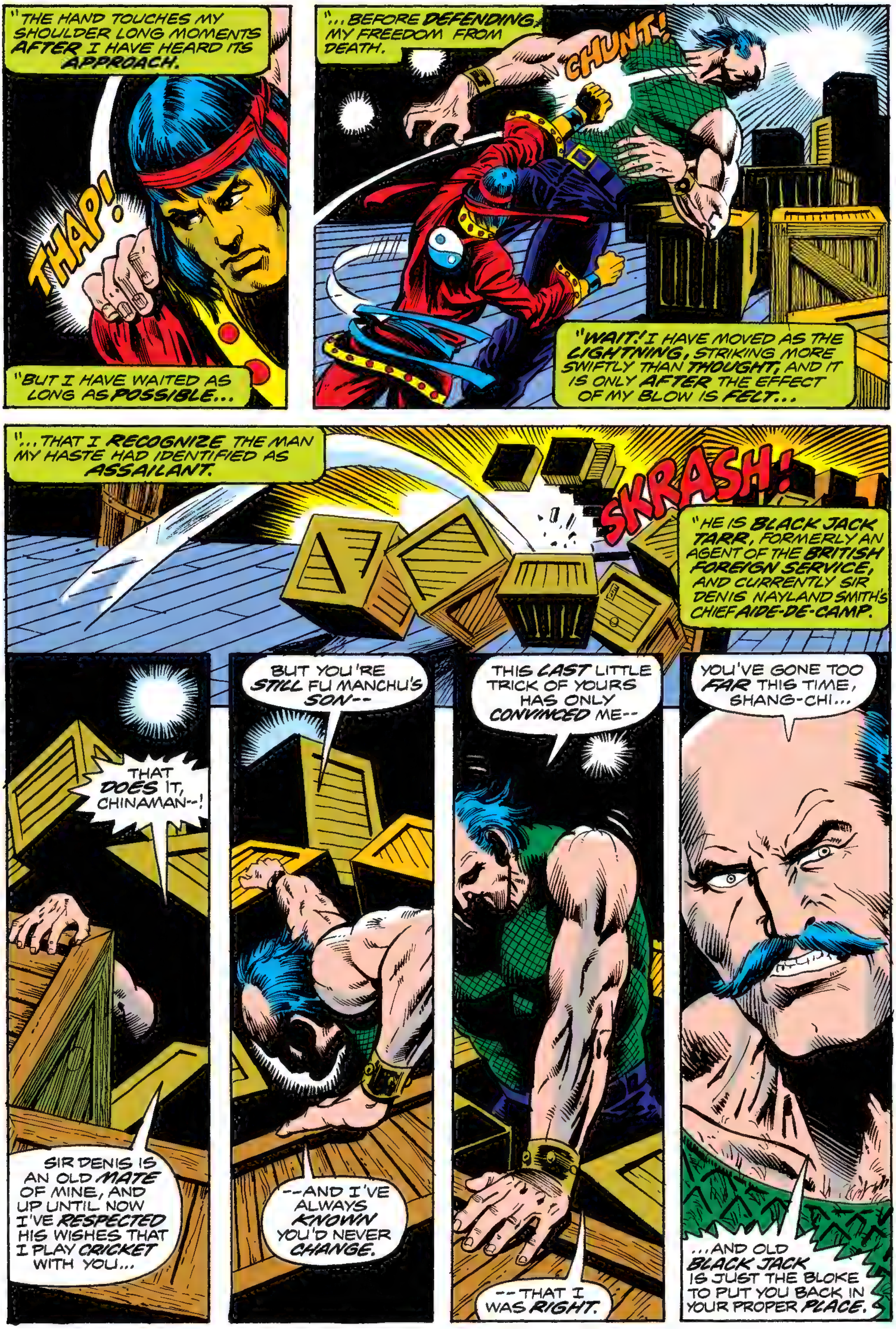
"Since then, I have learned that my father is **Dr. Fu Manchu** the most insidiously evil man on earth... and that to *honor* him would bring nothing but *dishonor* to the spirit of my *name*."

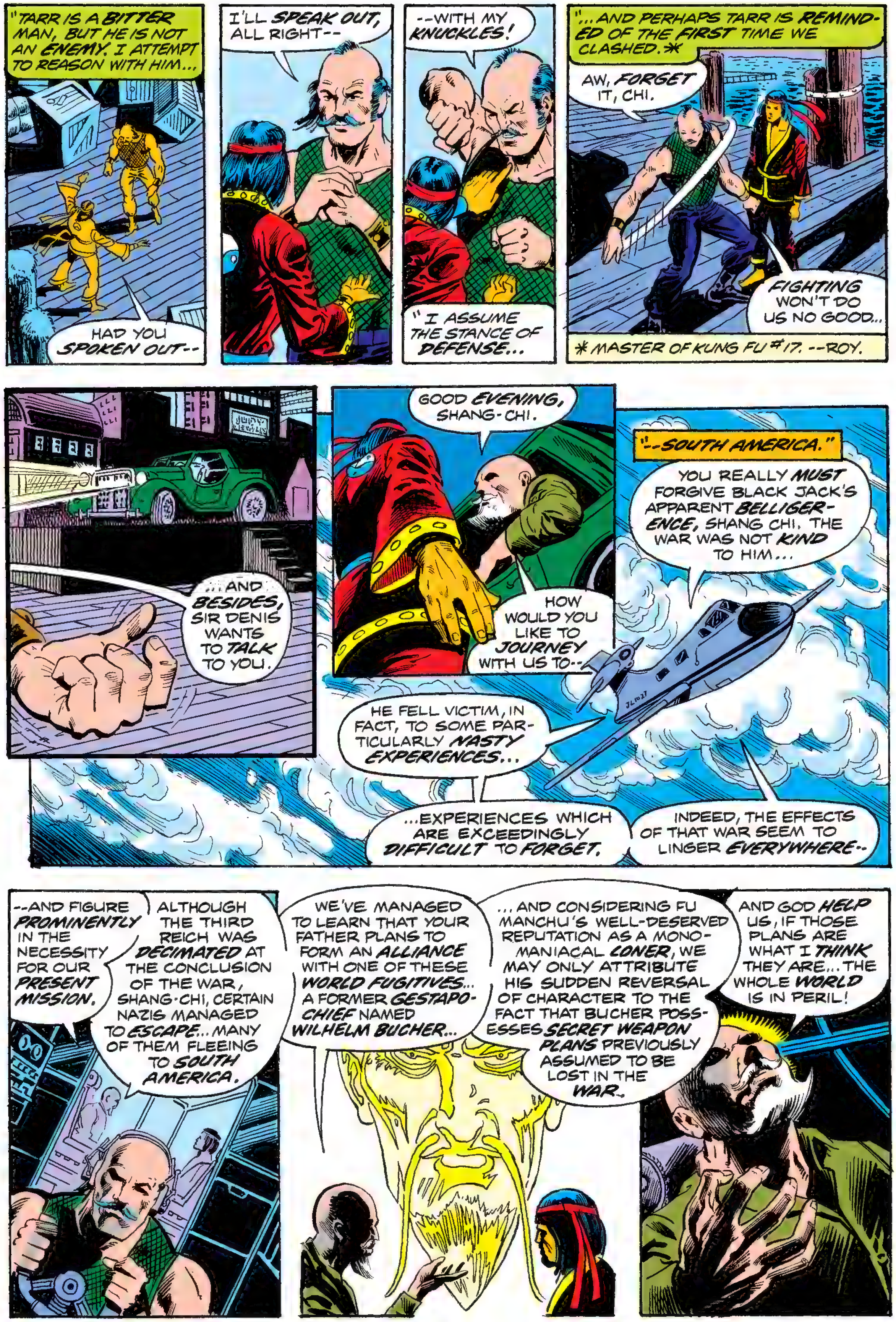
Stan Lee PRESENTS: **MASTER OF KUNG FU!** ™

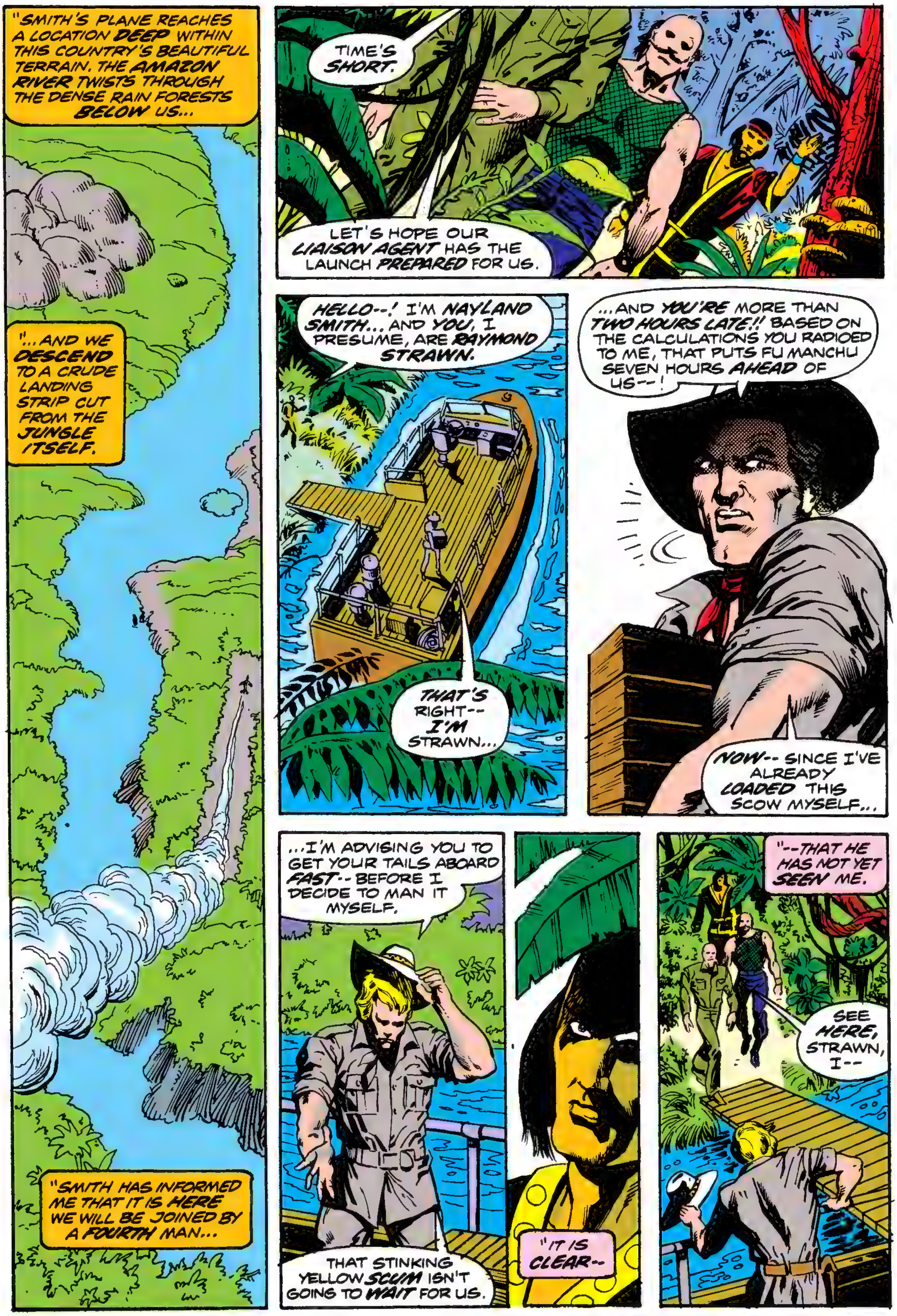
RIVER OF DEATH!

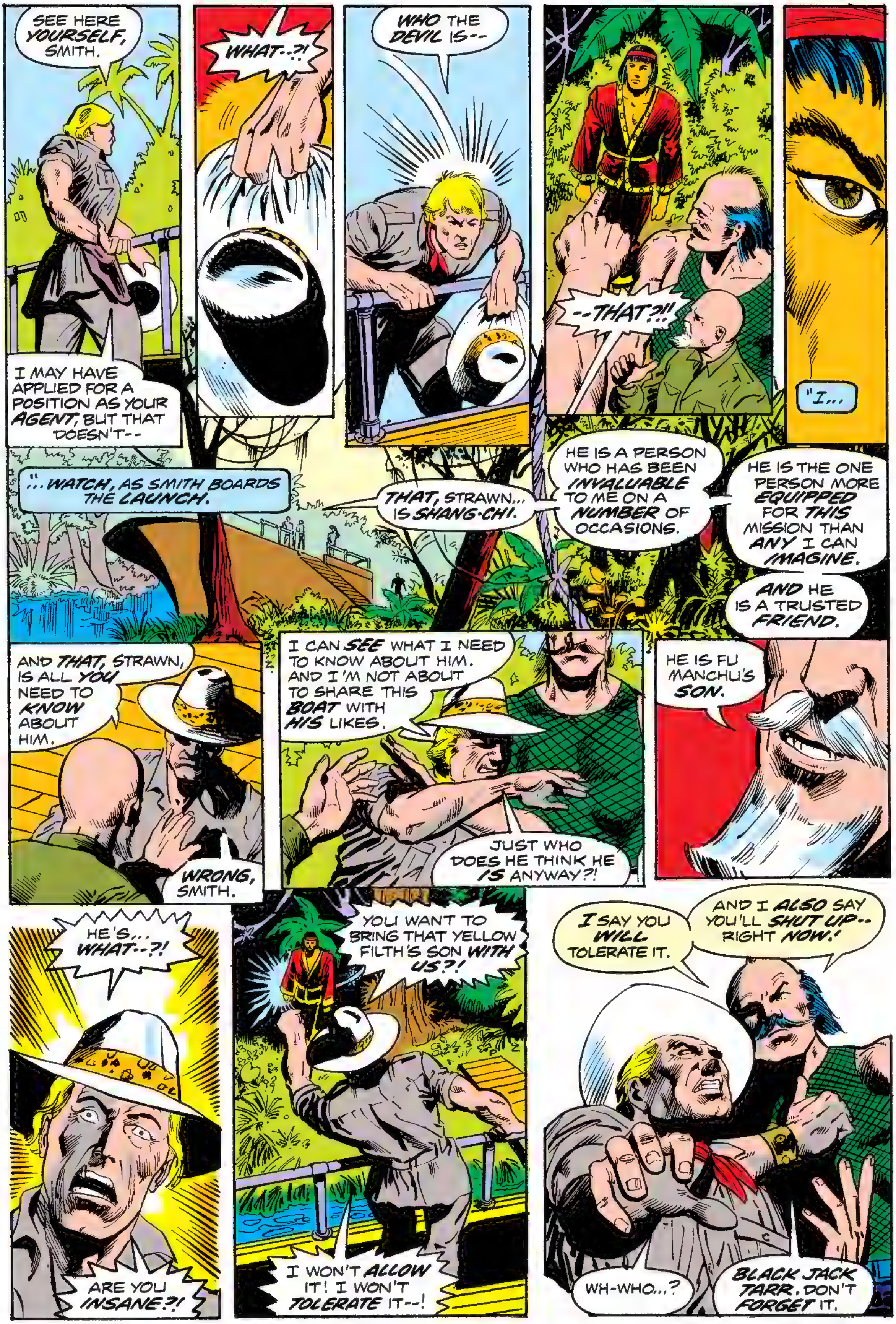

"THE NIGHT FAILS TO SOOTHE MY TROUBLED THROUGHTS.
"MY EYES CROSS WATER TO THE GIFT OF A SYMBOL.
"IT IS A STATUE WHICH REPRESENTS FREEDOM WON AT THE COST OF DEATH...
"...AND WHILE MY STUDIES IN PHILOSOPHY RENDER SUCH A CONCEPT FALSE, MY EXPERIENCE WITH THE NATURE OF MAN DICTATES THAT FALLACY IS OFTEN TRUTH.
"THUS, LIBERTY BECOMES THE REWARD OF BATTLE... WHETHER AGAINST A LEAGUE OF NATIONS...
"...OR THE UPRAISED HAND OF A SINGLE MAN.
MILGROM 7-74

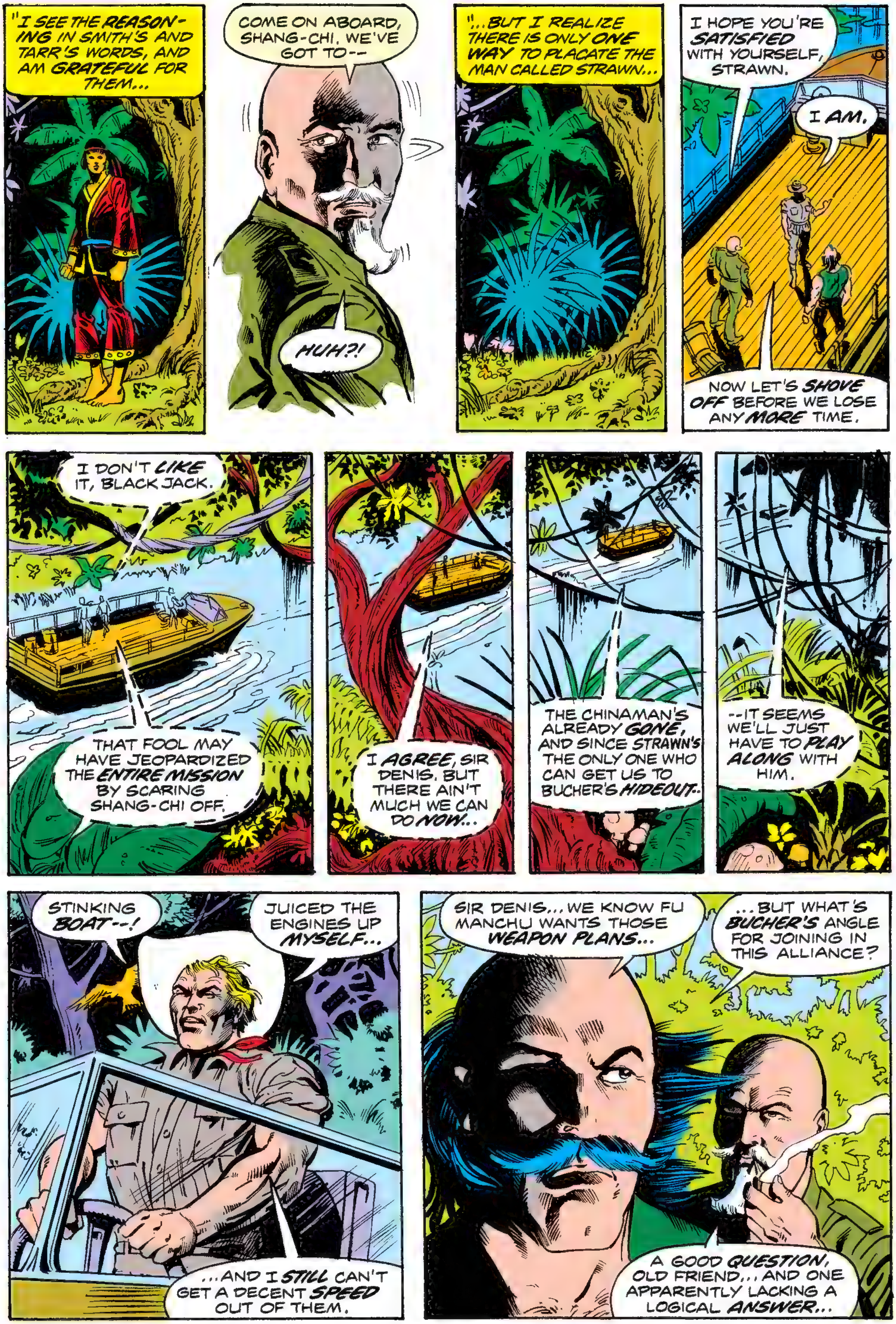
DOUG MOENCH WRITER
AL MILGROM & K. JANSON ARTISTS
JOHN COSTANZA, letterer . L. LESSMANN colorist . ROY THOMAS editor

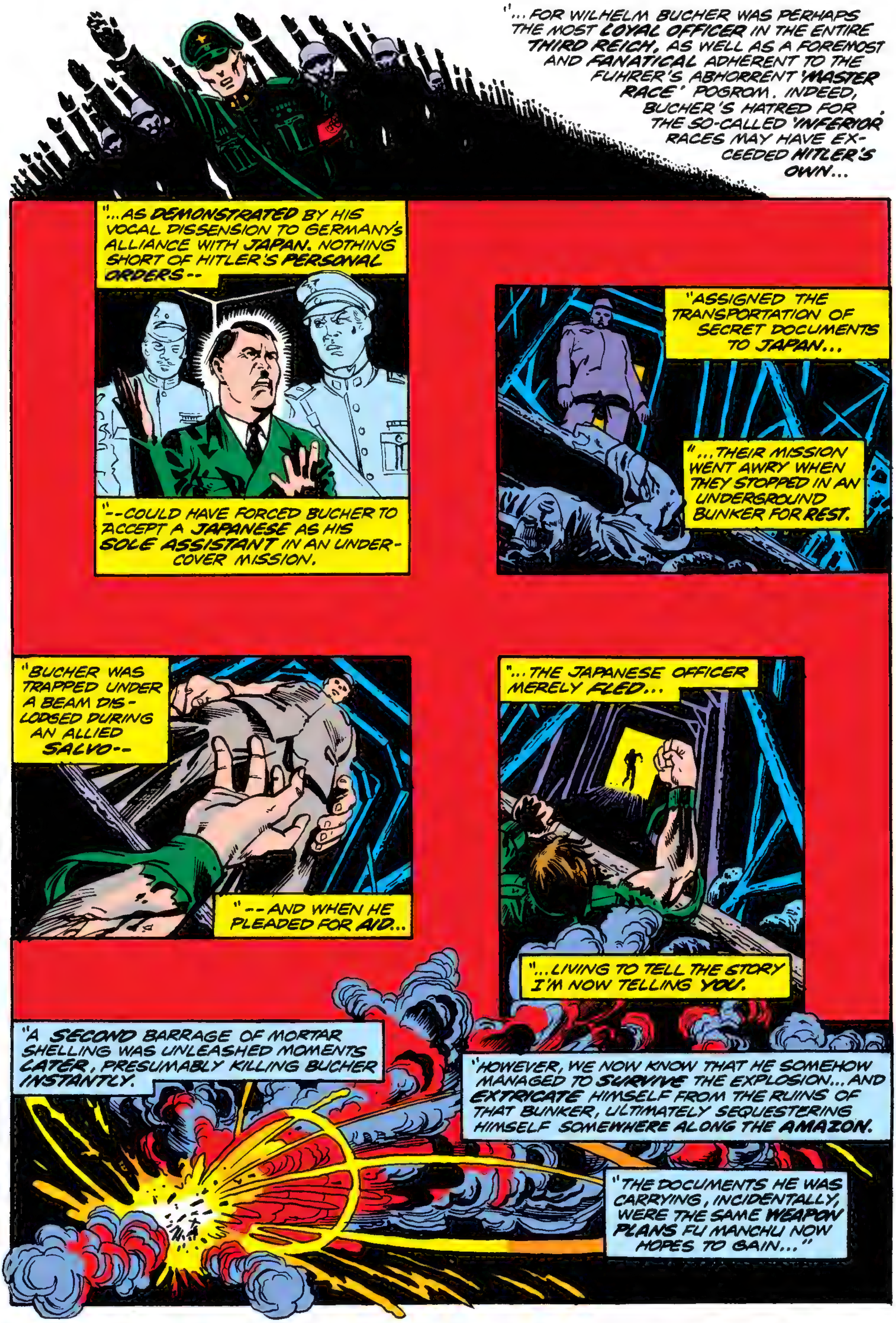

"THE HAND TOUCHES MY SHOULDER LONG MOMENTS **AFTER** I HAVE HEARD ITS **APPROACH.**
THAP!
"BUT I HAVE WAITED AS LONG AS **POSSIBLE...**
"...BEFORE **DEFENDING** MY FREEDOM FROM DEATH.
CHUNT!
"**WAIT!** I HAVE MOVED AS THE **LIGHTNING**, STRIKING MORE SWIFTLY THAN **THOUGHT**, AND IT IS ONLY **AFTER** THE EFFECT OF MY BLOW IS **FELT...**
"...THAT I **RECOGNIZE** THE MAN MY HASTE HAD IDENTIFIED AS **ASSAILANT.**
SKRASH!
"HE IS **BLACK JACK TARR**, FORMERLY AN AGENT OF THE **BRITISH FOREIGN SERVICE**, AND CURRENTLY SIR DENIS NAYLAND SMITH'S CHIEF **AIDE-DE-CAMP.**
THAT **DOES** IT, CHINAMAN--!
SIR DENIS IS AN OLD **MATE** OF MINE, AND UP UNTIL NOW I'VE **RESPECTED** HIS WISHES THAT I PLAY **CRICKET** WITH YOU...
BUT YOU'RE **STILL** FU MANCHU'S **SON**--
--AND I'VE ALWAYS **KNOWN** YOU'D NEVER **CHANGE.**
THIS **LAST** LITTLE TRICK OF YOURS HAS ONLY **CONVINCED** ME--
--THAT I WAS **RIGHT.**
YOU'VE GONE TOO **FAR** THIS TIME, SHANG-CHI...
...AND OLD **BLACK JACK** IS JUST THE BLOKE TO PUT YOU BACK IN YOUR PROPER **PLACE.**

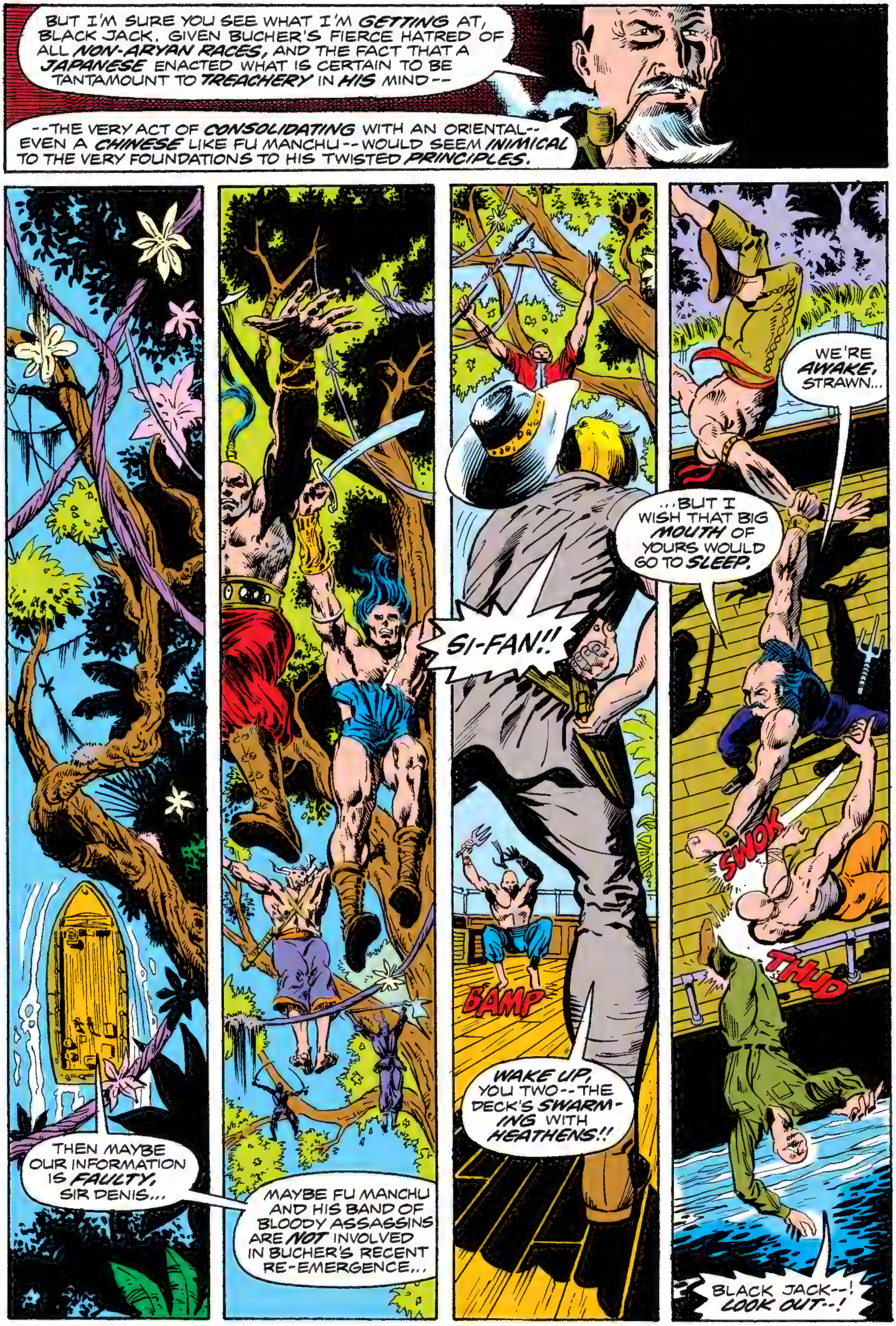

"TARR IS A BITTER MAN, BUT HE IS NOT AN ENEMY. I ATTEMPT TO REASON WITH HIM...
HAD YOU SPOKEN OUT--
I'LL SPEAK OUT, ALL RIGHT--
--WITH MY KNUCKLES!
"I ASSUME THE STANCE OF DEFENSE...
"...AND PERHAPS TARR IS REMINDED OF THE FIRST TIME WE CLASHED.*
AW, FORGET IT, CHI.
FIGHTING WON'T DO US NO GOOD...
* MASTER OF KUNG FU #17. --ROY.
...AND BESIDES, SIR DENIS WANTS TO TALK TO YOU.
GOOD EVENING, SHANG-CHI.
HOW WOULD YOU LIKE TO JOURNEY WITH US TO--
"--SOUTH AMERICA."
YOU REALLY MUST FORGIVE BLACK JACK'S APPARENT BELLIGERENCE, SHANG CHI. THE WAR WAS NOT KIND TO HIM...
HE FELL VICTIM, IN FACT, TO SOME PARTICULARLY NASTY EXPERIENCES...
...EXPERIENCES WHICH ARE EXCEEDINGLY DIFFICULT TO FORGET.
INDEED, THE EFFECTS OF THAT WAR SEEM TO LINGER EVERYWHERE--
--AND FIGURE PROMINENTLY IN THE NECESSITY FOR OUR PRESENT MISSION.
ALTHOUGH THE THIRD REICH WAS DECIMATED AT THE CONCLUSION OF THE WAR, SHANG-CHI, CERTAIN NAZIS MANAGED TO ESCAPE... MANY OF THEM FLEEING TO SOUTH AMERICA.
WE'VE MANAGED TO LEARN THAT YOUR FATHER PLANS TO FORM AN ALLIANCE WITH ONE OF THESE WORLD FUGITIVES... A FORMER GESTAPO-CHIEF NAMED WILHELM BUCHER...
...AND CONSIDERING FU MANCHU'S WELL-DESERVED REPUTATION AS A MONOMANIACAL LONER, WE MAY ONLY ATTRIBUTE HIS SUDDEN REVERSAL OF CHARACTER TO THE FACT THAT BUCHER POSSESSES SECRET WEAPON PLANS PREVIOUSLY ASSUMED TO BE LOST IN THE WAR.
AND GOD HELP US, IF THOSE PLANS ARE WHAT I THINK THEY ARE... THE WHOLE WORLD IS IN PERIL!

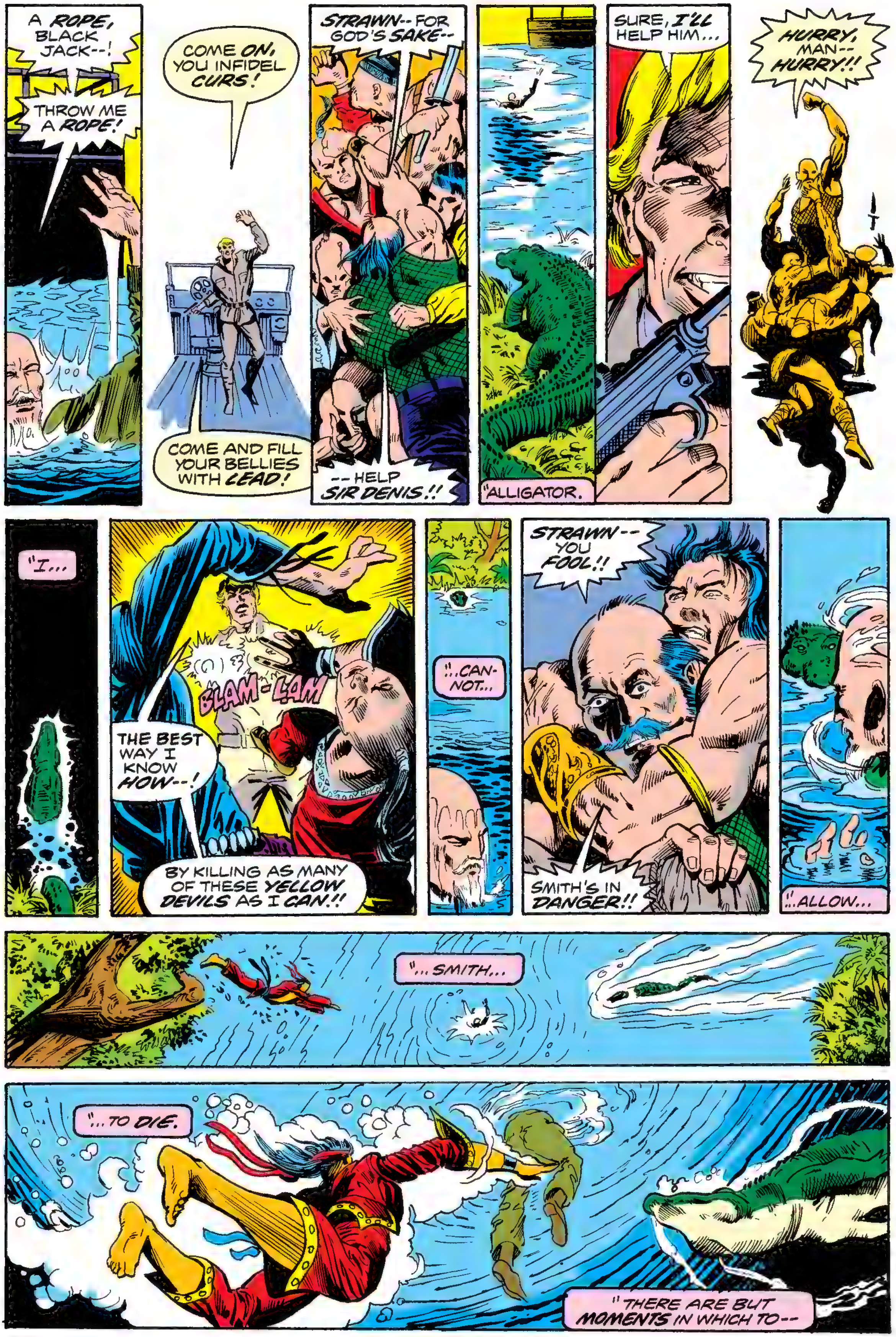

"SMITH'S PLANE REACHES A LOCATION DEEP WITHIN THIS COUNTRY'S BEAUTIFUL TERRAIN. THE AMAZON RIVER TWISTS THROUGH THE DENSE RAIN FORESTS BELOW US...
"...AND WE DESCEND TO A CRUDE LANDING STRIP CUT FROM THE JUNGLE ITSELF.
"SMITH HAS INFORMED ME THAT IT IS HERE WE WILL BE JOINED BY A FOURTH MAN...
TIME'S SHORT.
LET'S HOPE OUR LIAISON AGENT HAS THE LAUNCH PREPARED FOR US.
HELLO--! I'M NAYLAND SMITH... AND YOU, I PRESUME, ARE RAYMOND STRAWN.
THAT'S RIGHT-- I'M STRAWN...
...AND YOU'RE MORE THAN TWO HOURS LATE!! BASED ON THE CALCULATIONS YOU RADIOED TO ME, THAT PUTS FU MANCHU SEVEN HOURS AHEAD OF US--!
NOW-- SINCE I'VE ALREADY LOADED THIS SCOW MYSELF...
...I'M ADVISING YOU TO GET YOUR TAILS ABOARD FAST-- BEFORE I DECIDE TO MAN IT MYSELF.
THAT STINKING YELLOW SCUM ISN'T GOING TO WAIT FOR US.
"IT IS CLEAR--
"--THAT HE HAS NOT YET SEEN ME.
SEE HERE, STRAWN, I--

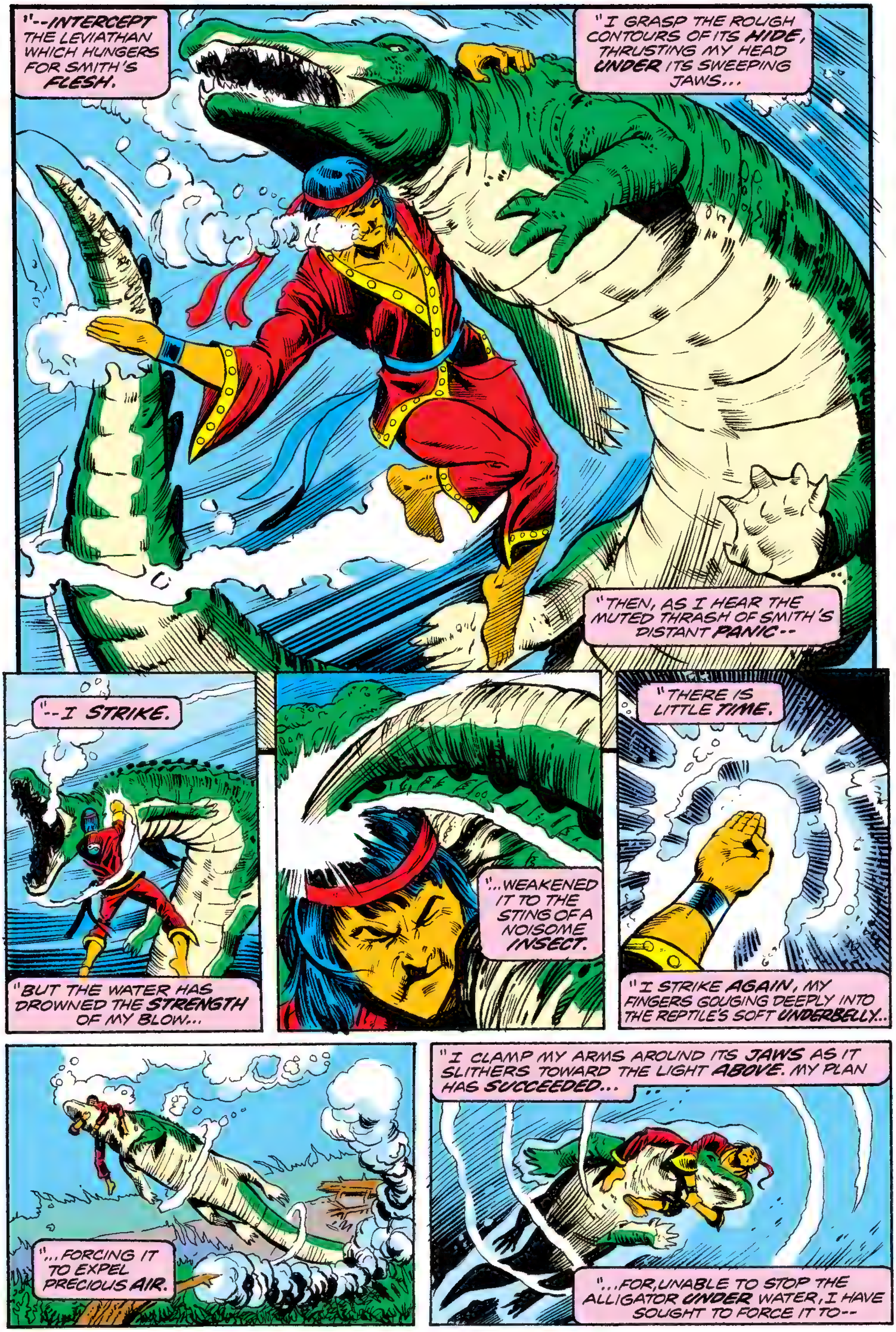

SEE HERE *YOURSELF*, SMITH.
I MAY HAVE APPLIED FOR A POSITION AS YOUR *AGENT*, BUT THAT DOESN'T--
WHAT--?!
WHO THE *DEVIL* IS--
--THAT?!!
"I...
"...*WATCH, AS SMITH BOARDS THE LAUNCH.*
THAT, STRAWN... IS *SHANG-CHI*.
HE IS A PERSON WHO HAS BEEN *INVALUABLE* TO ME ON A *NUMBER* OF OCCASIONS.
HE IS THE ONE PERSON MORE *EQUIPPED* FOR *THIS* MISSION THAN *ANY* I CAN *IMAGINE*.
AND HE IS A TRUSTED *FRIEND*.
AND *THAT*, STRAWN, IS ALL *YOU* NEED TO *KNOW* ABOUT HIM.
WRONG, SMITH.
I CAN *SEE* WHAT I NEED TO KNOW ABOUT HIM. AND I'M NOT ABOUT TO SHARE THIS *BOAT* WITH *HIS* LIKES.
JUST WHO DOES HE THINK HE *IS* ANYWAY?!
HE IS FU MANCHU'S *SON*.
HE'S... *WHAT--?!*
ARE YOU *INSANE?!*
YOU WANT TO BRING THAT YELLOW FILTH'S SON *WITH US?!*
I WON'T *ALLOW* IT! I WON'T *TOLERATE* IT--!
I SAY YOU *WILL* TOLERATE IT.
AND I *ALSO* SAY YOU'LL *SHUT UP*-- RIGHT *NOW!*
WH-WHO...?
BLACK JACK TARR. DON'T *FORGET* IT.

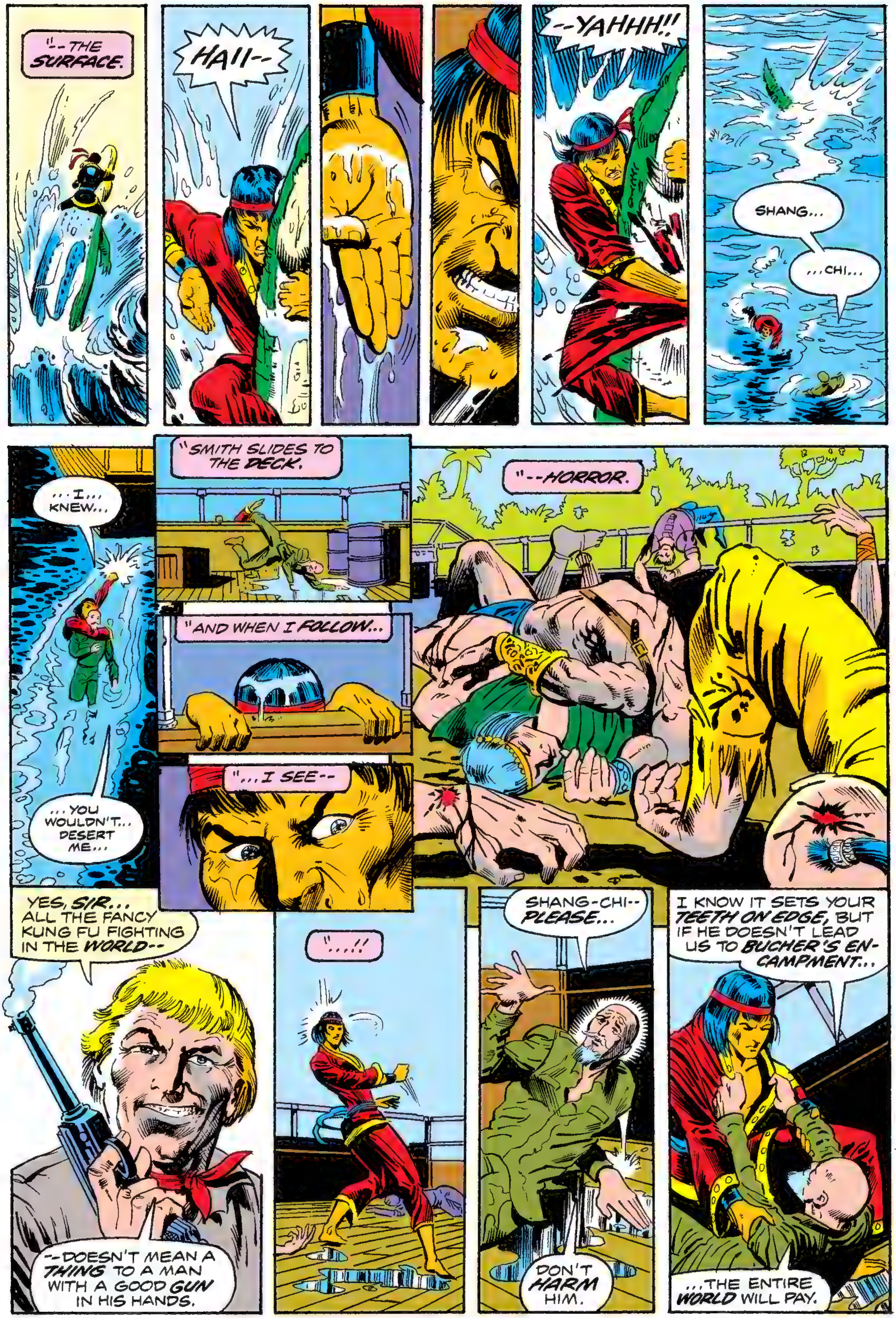

"I SEE THE REASONING IN SMITH'S AND TARR'S WORDS, AND AM GRATEFUL FOR THEM...
COME ON ABOARD, SHANG-CHI. WE'VE GOT TO--
HUH?!
"...BUT I REALIZE THERE IS ONLY ONE WAY TO PLACATE THE MAN CALLED STRAWN...
I HOPE YOU'RE SATISFIED WITH YOURSELF, STRAWN.
I AM.
NOW LET'S SHOVE OFF BEFORE WE LOSE ANY MORE TIME.
I DON'T LIKE IT, BLACK JACK.
THAT FOOL MAY HAVE JEOPARDIZED THE ENTIRE MISSION BY SCARING SHANG-CHI OFF.
I AGREE, SIR DENIS. BUT THERE AIN'T MUCH WE CAN DO NOW...
THE CHINAMAN'S ALREADY GONE, AND SINCE STRAWN'S THE ONLY ONE WHO CAN GET US TO BUCHER'S HIDEOUT..
--IT SEEMS WE'LL JUST HAVE TO PLAY ALONG WITH HIM.
STINKING BOAT--!
JUICED THE ENGINES UP MYSELF...
...AND I STILL CAN'T GET A DECENT SPEED OUT OF THEM.
SIR DENIS... WE KNOW FU MANCHU WANTS THOSE WEAPON PLANS...
...BUT WHAT'S BUCHER'S ANGLE FOR JOINING IN THIS ALLIANCE?
A GOOD QUESTION, OLD FRIEND... AND ONE APPARENTLY LACKING A LOGICAL ANSWER...

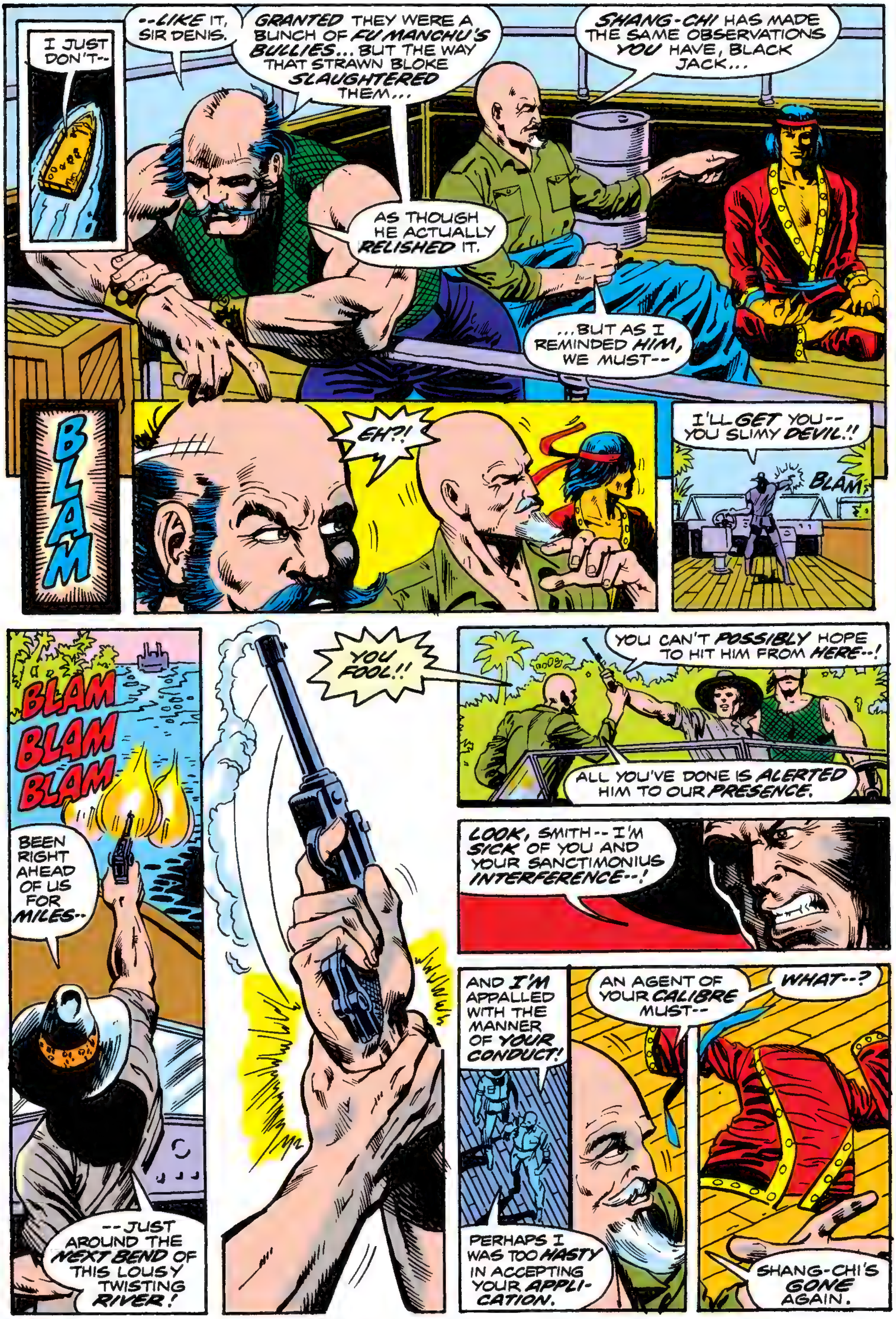

"...FOR WILHELM BUCHER WAS PERHAPS THE MOST LOYAL OFFICER IN THE ENTIRE THIRD REICH, AS WELL AS A FOREMOST AND FANATICAL ADHERENT TO THE FUHRER'S ABHORRENT 'MASTER RACE' POGROM. INDEED, BUCHER'S HATRED FOR THE SO-CALLED 'INFERIOR RACES MAY HAVE EXCEEDED HITLER'S OWN...
"...AS DEMONSTRATED BY HIS VOCAL DISSENSION TO GERMANY'S ALLIANCE WITH JAPAN. NOTHING SHORT OF HITLER'S PERSONAL ORDERS--
"--COULD HAVE FORCED BUCHER TO ACCEPT A JAPANESE AS HIS SOLE ASSISTANT IN AN UNDERCOVER MISSION.
"ASSIGNED THE TRANSPORTATION OF SECRET DOCUMENTS TO JAPAN...
"...THEIR MISSION WENT AWRY WHEN THEY STOPPED IN AN UNDERGROUND BUNKER FOR REST.
"BUCHER WAS TRAPPED UNDER A BEAM DISLODGED DURING AN ALLIED SALVO--
"--AND WHEN HE PLEADED FOR AID...
"...THE JAPANESE OFFICER MERELY FLED...
"...LIVING TO TELL THE STORY I'M NOW TELLING YOU.
"A SECOND BARRAGE OF MORTAR SHELLING WAS UNLEASHED MOMENTS LATER, PRESUMABLY KILLING BUCHER INSTANTLY.
"HOWEVER, WE NOW KNOW THAT HE SOMEHOW MANAGED TO SURVIVE THE EXPLOSION...AND EXTRICATE HIMSELF FROM THE RUINS OF THAT BUNKER, ULTIMATELY SEQUESTERING HIMSELF SOMEWHERE ALONG THE AMAZON.
"THE DOCUMENTS HE WAS CARRYING, INCIDENTALLY, WERE THE SAME WEAPON PLANS FU MANCHU NOW HOPES TO GAIN..."

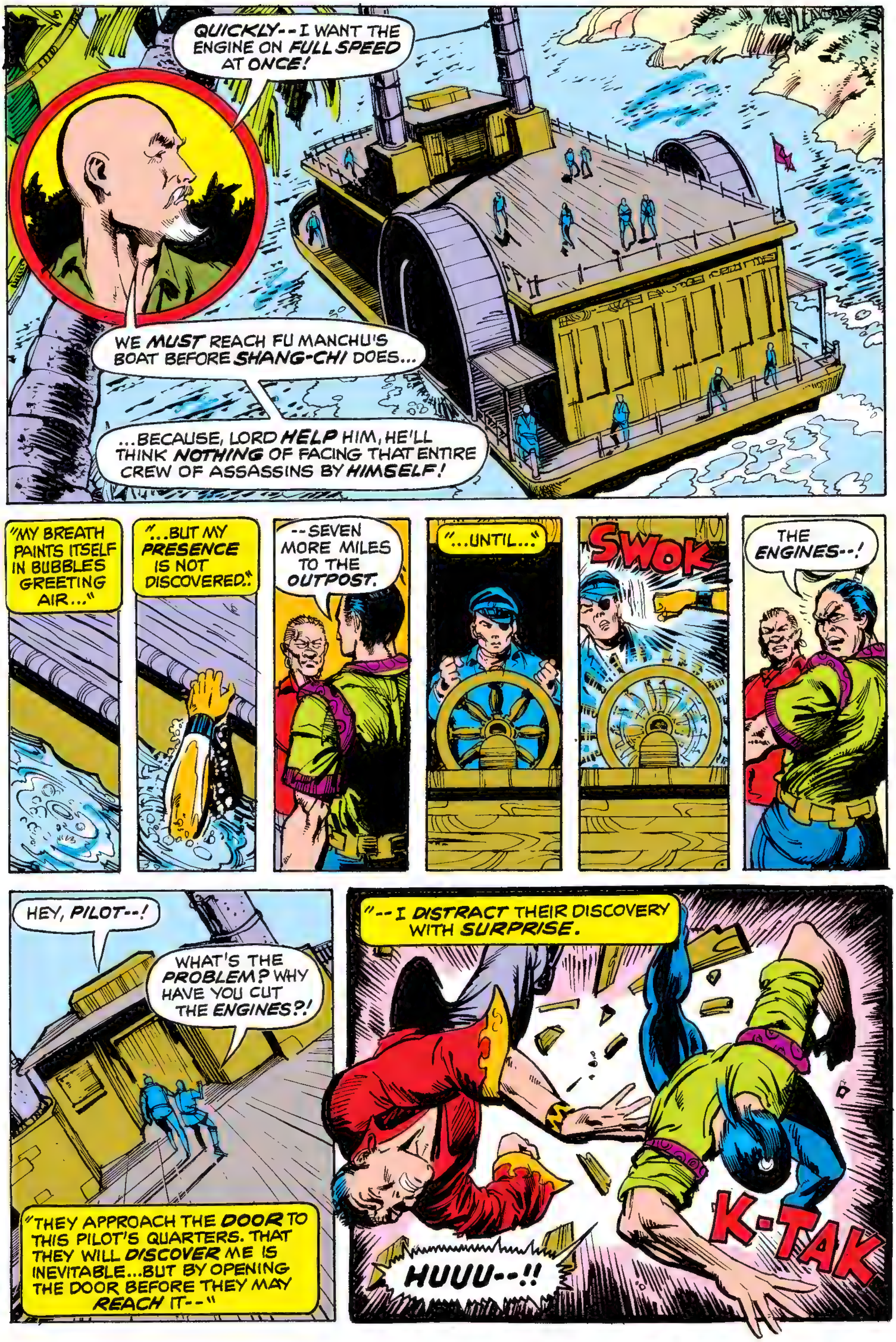

BUT I'M SURE YOU SEE WHAT I'M *GETTING* AT, BLACK JACK. GIVEN BUCHER'S FIERCE HATRED OF ALL *NON-ARYAN RACES,* AND THE FACT THAT A *JAPANESE* ENACTED WHAT IS CERTAIN TO BE TANTAMOUNT TO *TREACHERY* IN *HIS* MIND--
--THE VERY ACT OF *CONSOLIDATING* WITH AN ORIENTAL-- EVEN A *CHINESE* LIKE FU MANCHU--WOULD SEEM *INIMICAL* TO THE VERY FOUNDATIONS TO HIS TWISTED *PRINCIPLES.*
THEN MAYBE OUR INFORMATION IS *FAULTY,* SIR DENIS...
MAYBE FU MANCHU AND HIS BAND OF BLOODY ASSASSINS ARE *NOT* INVOLVED IN BUCHER'S RECENT RE-EMERGENCE...
SI-FAN!!
BAMP
WAKE UP, YOU TWO--THE DECK'S *SWARMING* WITH *HEATHENS!!*
WE'RE *AWAKE,* STRAWN...
...BUT I WISH THAT BIG *MOUTH* OF YOURS WOULD GO TO *SLEEP.*
SWOK
THUD
BLACK JACK--! *LOOK OUT*--!

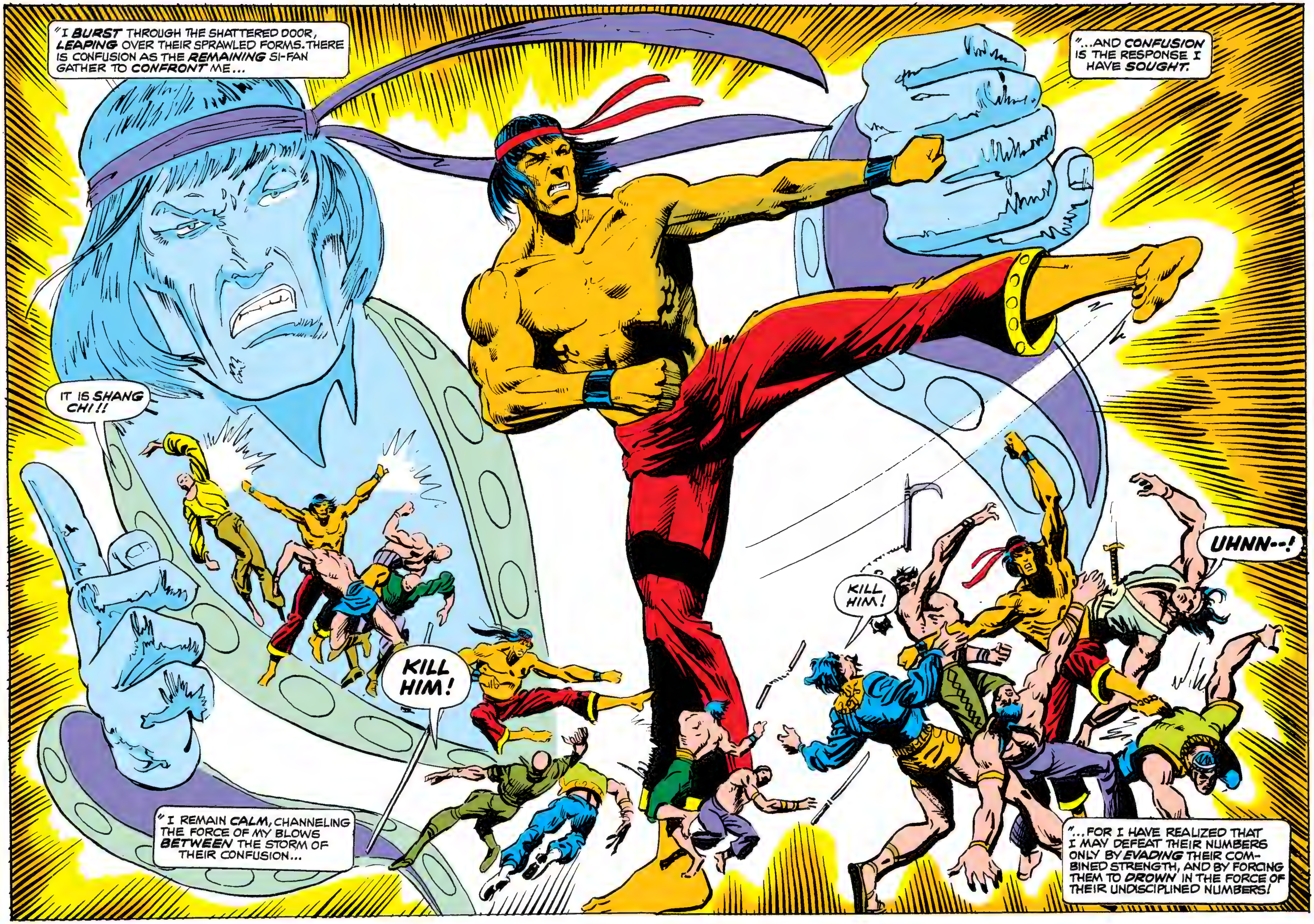

A ROPE, BLACK JACK--!
THROW ME A ROPE!
COME ON, YOU INFIDEL CURS!
COME AND FILL YOUR BELLIES WITH LEAD!
STRAWN--FOR GOD'S SAKE--
--HELP SIR DENIS!!
"ALLIGATOR.
SURE, I'LL HELP HIM...
HURRY, MAN--HURRY!!
"I...
BLAM-LAM
THE BEST WAY I KNOW HOW--!
BY KILLING AS MANY OF THESE YELLOW DEVILS AS I CAN!!
"...CAN-NOT...
STRAWN--YOU FOOL!!
SMITH'S IN DANGER!!
"...ALLOW...
"...SMITH...
"...TO DIE.
"THERE ARE BUT MOMENTS IN WHICH TO--

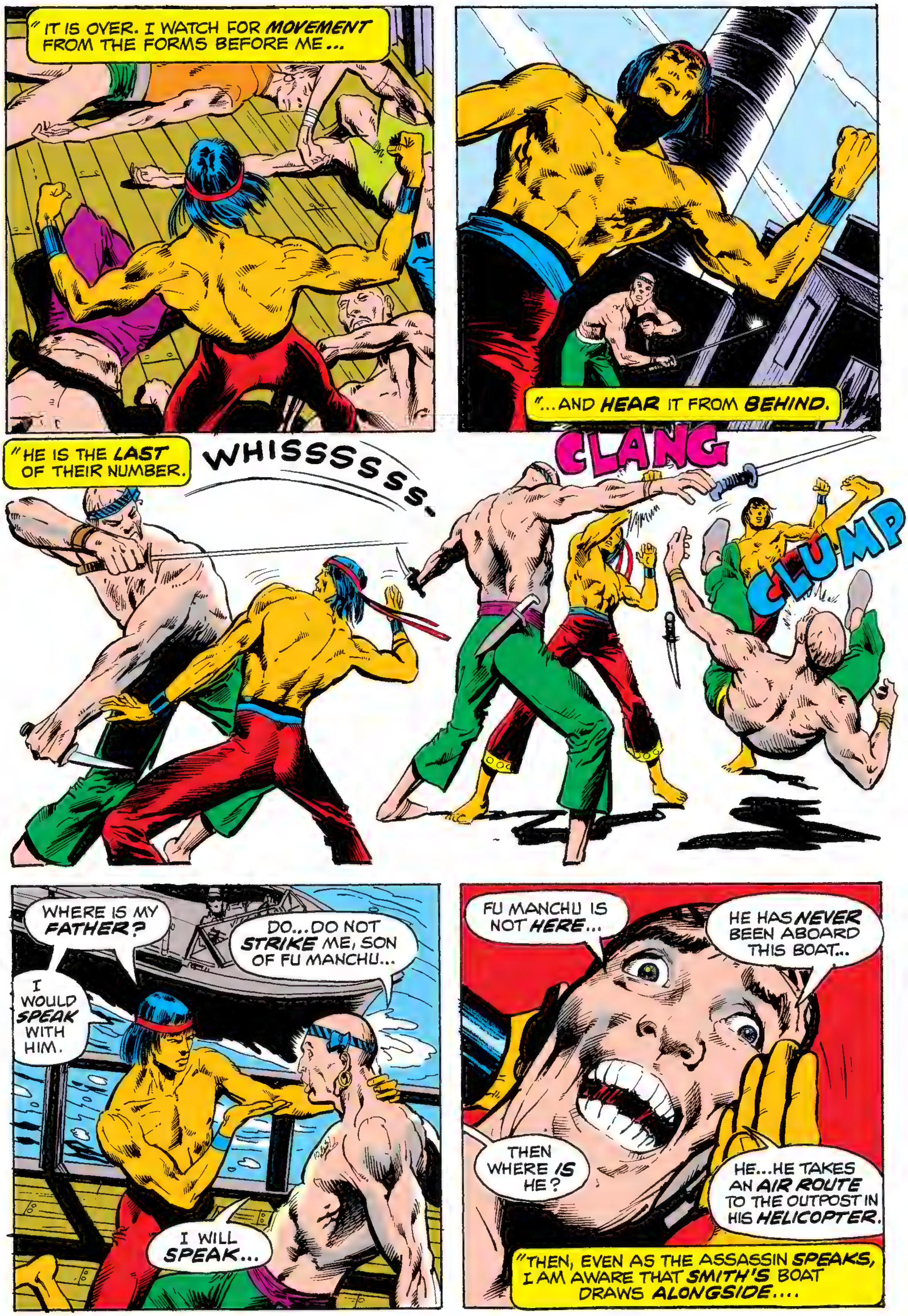

"--INTERCEPT THE LEVIATHAN WHICH HUNGERS FOR SMITH'S FLESH.
"I GRASP THE ROUGH CONTOURS OF ITS HIDE, THRUSTING MY HEAD UNDER ITS SWEEPING JAWS...
"THEN, AS I HEAR THE MUTED THRASH OF SMITH'S DISTANT PANIC--
"--I STRIKE.
"BUT THE WATER HAS DROWNED THE STRENGTH OF MY BLOW...
"...WEAKENED IT TO THE STING OF A NOISOME INSECT.
"THERE IS LITTLE TIME.
"I STRIKE AGAIN, MY FINGERS GOUGING DEEPLY INTO THE REPTILE'S SOFT UNDERBELLY...
"I CLAMP MY ARMS AROUND ITS JAWS AS IT SLITHERS TOWARD THE LIGHT ABOVE. MY PLAN HAS SUCCEEDED...
"...FOR, UNABLE TO STOP THE ALLIGATOR UNDER WATER, I HAVE SOUGHT TO FORCE IT TO--
"...FORCING IT TO EXPEL PRECIOUS AIR.

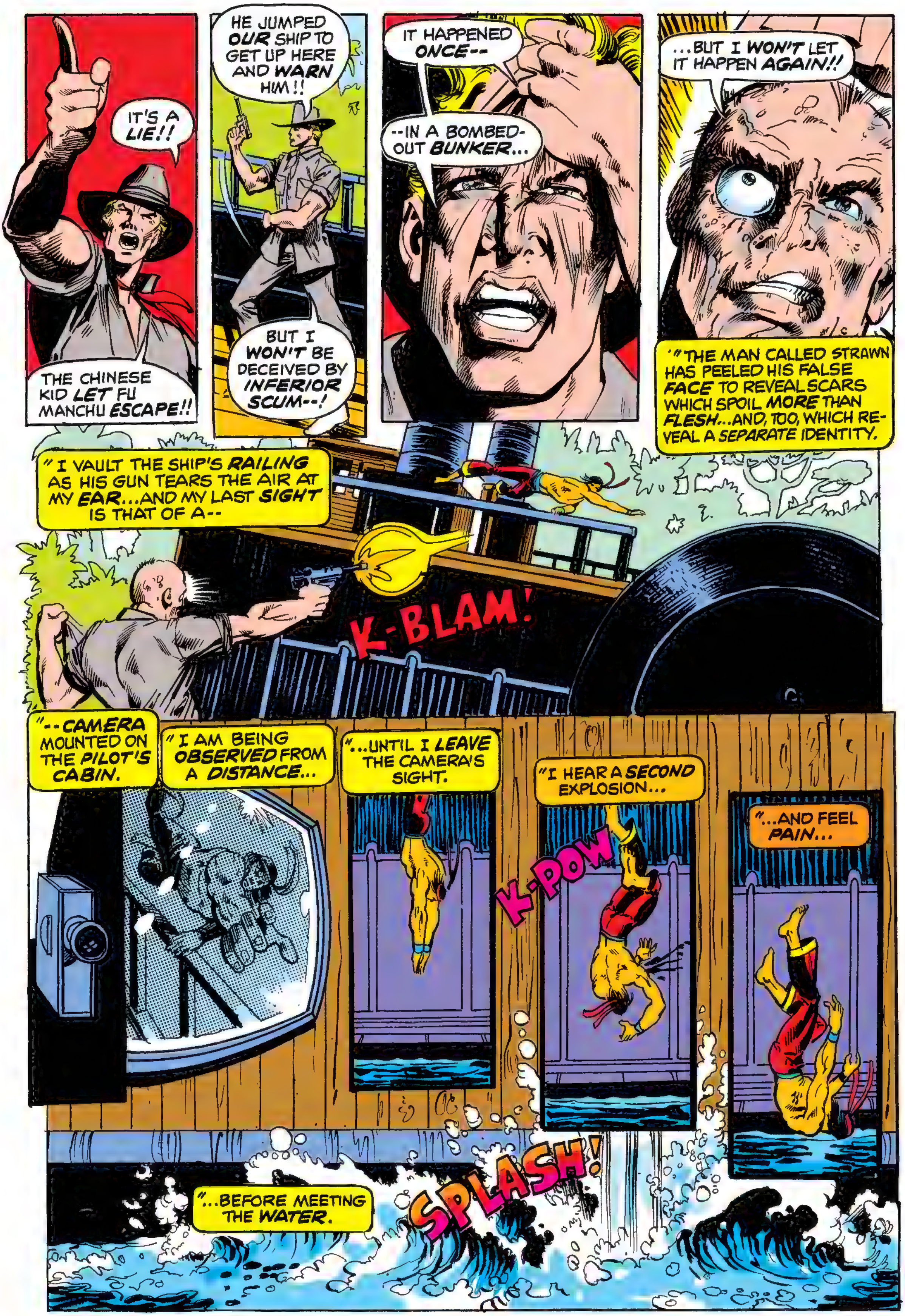

"--THE SURFACE.
HAI!--
--YAHHH!!
SHANG...
...CHI...
...I... KNEW...
...YOU WOULDN'T... DESERT ME...
"SMITH SLIDES TO THE DECK.
"AND WHEN I FOLLOW...
"...I SEE--
"--HORROR.
YES, SIR... ALL THE FANCY KUNG FU FIGHTING IN THE WORLD--
--DOESN'T MEAN A THING TO A MAN WITH A GOOD GUN IN HIS HANDS.
"...!!
SHANG-CHI-- PLEASE...
DON'T HARM HIM.
I KNOW IT SETS YOUR TEETH ON EDGE, BUT IF HE DOESN'T LEAD US TO BUCHER'S ENCAMPMENT...
...THE ENTIRE WORLD WILL PAY.

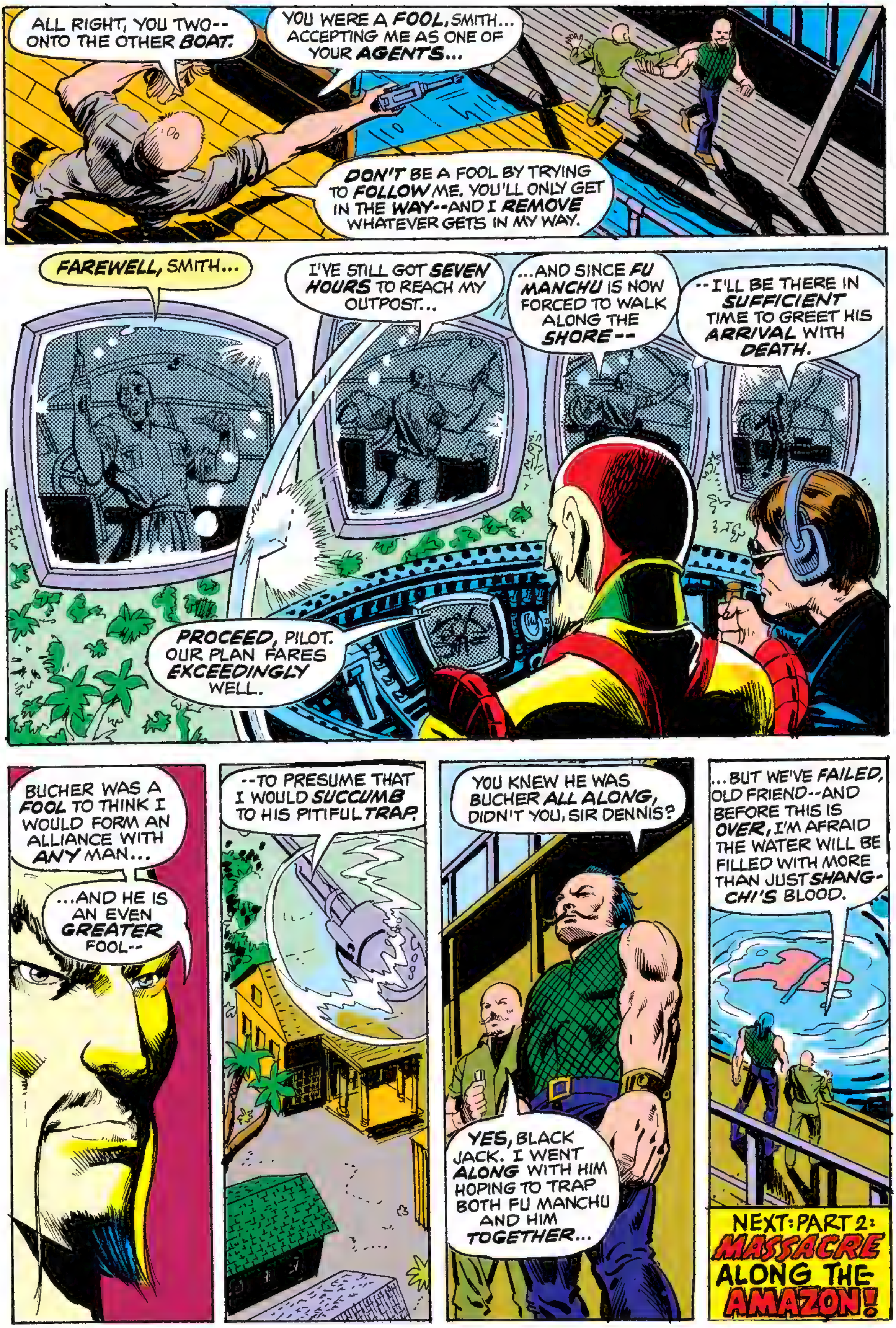

I JUST DON'T--
--LIKE IT, SIR DENIS.
GRANTED THEY WERE A BUNCH OF FU MANCHU'S BULLIES... BUT THE WAY THAT STRAWN BLOKE SLAUGHTERED THEM...
AS THOUGH HE ACTUALLY RELISHED IT.
SHANG-CHI HAS MADE THE SAME OBSERVATIONS YOU HAVE, BLACK JACK...
...BUT AS I REMINDED HIM, WE MUST--
BLAM
EH?!
I'LL GET YOU-- YOU SLIMY DEVIL!!
BLAM
BLAM BLAM BLAM
BEEN RIGHT AHEAD OF US FOR MILES--
--JUST AROUND THE NEXT BEND OF THIS LOUSY TWISTING RIVER!
YOU FOOL!!
YOU CAN'T POSSIBLY HOPE TO HIT HIM FROM HERE--!
ALL YOU'VE DONE IS ALERTED HIM TO OUR PRESENCE.
LOOK, SMITH-- I'M SICK OF YOU AND YOUR SANCTIMONIUS INTERFERENCE--!
AND I'M APPALLED WITH THE MANNER OF YOUR CONDUCT!
PERHAPS I WAS TOO HASTY IN ACCEPTING YOUR APPLICATION.
AN AGENT OF YOUR CALIBRE MUST--
WHAT--?
SHANG-CHI'S GONE AGAIN.

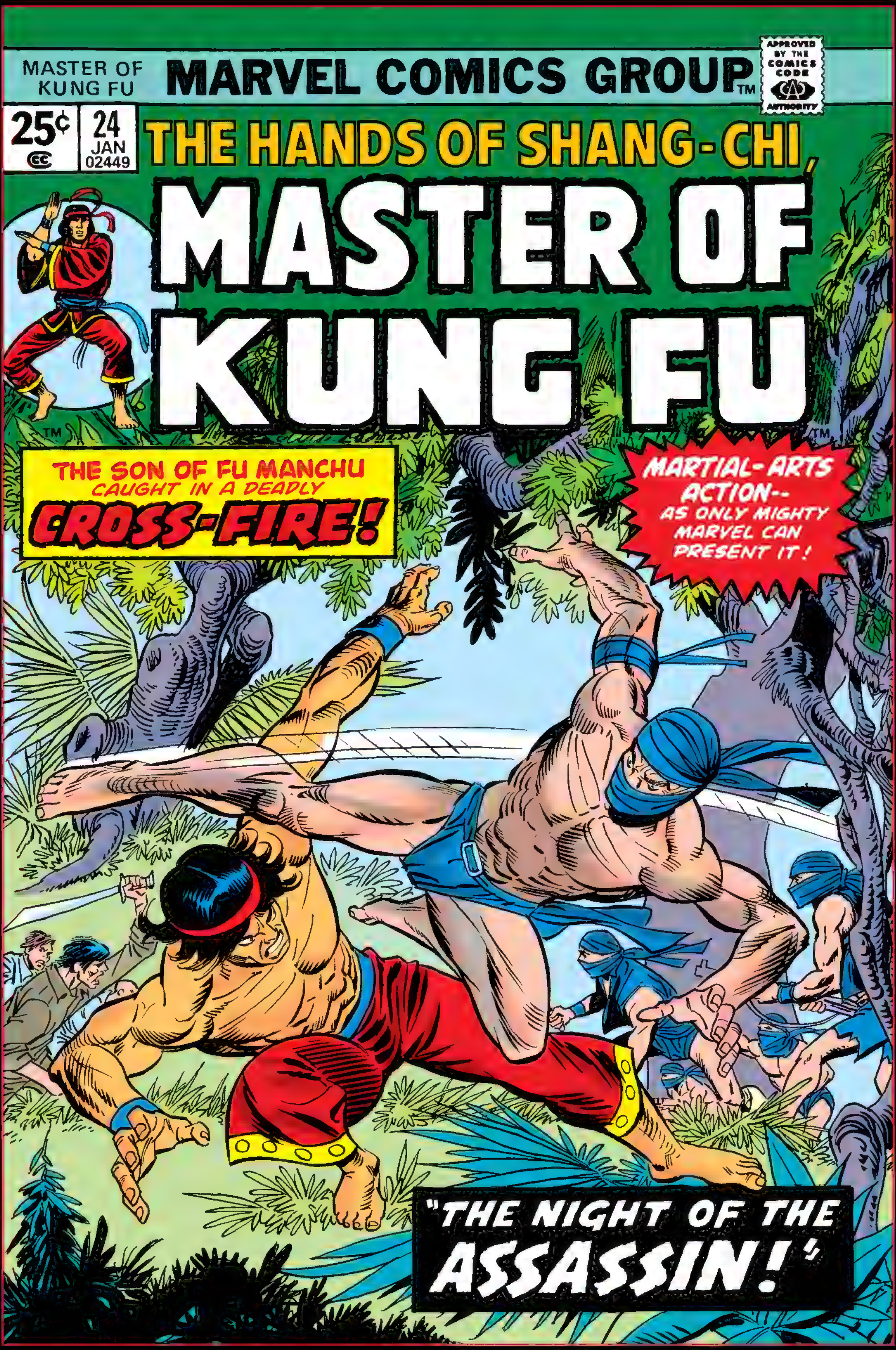

QUICKLY--I WANT THE ENGINE ON FULL SPEED AT ONCE!
WE MUST REACH FU MANCHU'S BOAT BEFORE SHANG-CHI DOES...
...BECAUSE, LORD HELP HIM, HE'LL THINK NOTHING OF FACING THAT ENTIRE CREW OF ASSASSINS BY HIMSELF!
"MY BREATH PAINTS ITSELF IN BUBBLES GREETING AIR..."
"...BUT MY PRESENCE IS NOT DISCOVERED."
--SEVEN MORE MILES TO THE OUTPOST.
"...UNTIL..."
SWOK
THE ENGINES--!
HEY, PILOT--!
WHAT'S THE PROBLEM? WHY HAVE YOU CUT THE ENGINES?!
"THEY APPROACH THE DOOR TO THIS PILOT'S QUARTERS. THAT THEY WILL DISCOVER ME IS INEVITABLE...BUT BY OPENING THE DOOR BEFORE THEY MAY REACH IT--"
"--I DISTRACT THEIR DISCOVERY WITH SURPRISE.
HUUU--!!
K-TAK


"I BURST THROUGH THE SHATTERED DOOR, LEAPING OVER THEIR SPRAWLED FORMS. THERE IS CONFUSION AS THE REMAINING SI-FAN GATHER TO CONFRONT ME...
"...AND CONFUSION IS THE RESPONSE I HAVE SOUGHT.
IT IS SHANG CHI!!
KILL HIM!
KILL HIM!
UHNN--!
"I REMAIN CALM, CHANNELING THE FORCE OF MY BLOWS BETWEEN THE STORM OF THEIR CONFUSION...
"...FOR I HAVE REALIZED THAT I MAY DEFEAT THEIR NUMBERS ONLY BY EVADING THEIR COMBINED STRENGTH, AND BY FORCING THEM TO DROWN IN THE FORCE OF THEIR UNDISCIPLINED NUMBERS!


"IT IS OVER. I WATCH FOR MOVEMENT FROM THE FORMS BEFORE ME...
"...AND HEAR IT FROM BEHIND.
"HE IS THE LAST OF THEIR NUMBER.
WHISSSSSSS
CLANG
CLUMP
WHERE IS MY FATHER?
I WOULD SPEAK WITH HIM.
DO...DO NOT STRIKE ME, SON OF FU MANCHU...
I WILL SPEAK...
FU MANCHU IS NOT HERE...
HE HAS NEVER BEEN ABOARD THIS BOAT...
THEN WHERE IS HE?
HE...HE TAKES AN AIR ROUTE TO THE OUTPOST IN HIS HELICOPTER.
"THEN, EVEN AS THE ASSASSIN SPEAKS, I AM AWARE THAT SMITH'S BOAT DRAWS ALONGSIDE....


IT'S A LIE!!
THE CHINESE KID LET FU MANCHU ESCAPE!!
HE JUMPED OUR SHIP TO GET UP HERE AND WARN HIM!!
BUT I WON'T BE DECEIVED BY INFERIOR SCUM--!
IT HAPPENED ONCE--
--IN A BOMBED-OUT BUNKER...
...BUT I WON'T LET IT HAPPEN AGAIN!!
'"THE MAN CALLED STRAWN HAS PEELED HIS FALSE FACE TO REVEAL SCARS WHICH SPOIL MORE THAN FLESH...AND, TOO, WHICH REVEAL A SEPARATE IDENTITY.
"I VAULT THE SHIP'S RAILING AS HIS GUN TEARS THE AIR AT MY EAR...AND MY LAST SIGHT IS THAT OF A--
K-BLAM!
"--CAMERA MOUNTED ON THE PILOT'S CABIN.
"I AM BEING OBSERVED FROM A DISTANCE...
"...UNTIL I LEAVE THE CAMERA'S SIGHT.
"I HEAR A SECOND EXPLOSION...
K-POW
"...AND FEEL PAIN...
"...BEFORE MEETING THE WATER.
SPLASH!


ALL RIGHT, YOU TWO-- ONTO THE OTHER BOAT.
YOU WERE A FOOL, SMITH... ACCEPTING ME AS ONE OF YOUR AGENTS...
DON'T BE A FOOL BY TRYING TO FOLLOW ME. YOU'LL ONLY GET IN THE WAY--AND I REMOVE WHATEVER GETS IN MY WAY.
FAREWELL, SMITH...
I'VE STILL GOT SEVEN HOURS TO REACH MY OUTPOST...
...AND SINCE FU MANCHU IS NOW FORCED TO WALK ALONG THE SHORE--
--I'LL BE THERE IN SUFFICIENT TIME TO GREET HIS ARRIVAL WITH DEATH.
PROCEED, PILOT. OUR PLAN FARES EXCEEDINGLY WELL.
BUCHER WAS A FOOL TO THINK I WOULD FORM AN ALLIANCE WITH ANY MAN...
...AND HE IS AN EVEN GREATER FOOL--
--TO PRESUME THAT I WOULD SUCCUMB TO HIS PITIFUL TRAP.
YOU KNEW HE WAS BUCHER ALL ALONG, DIDN'T YOU, SIR DENNIS?
YES, BLACK JACK. I WENT ALONG WITH HIM HOPING TO TRAP BOTH FU MANCHU AND HIM TOGETHER...
...BUT WE'VE FAILED, OLD FRIEND--AND BEFORE THIS IS OVER, I'M AFRAID THE WATER WILL BE FILLED WITH MORE THAN JUST SHANG-CHI'S BLOOD.
NEXT: PART 2: MASSACRE ALONG THE AMAZON!

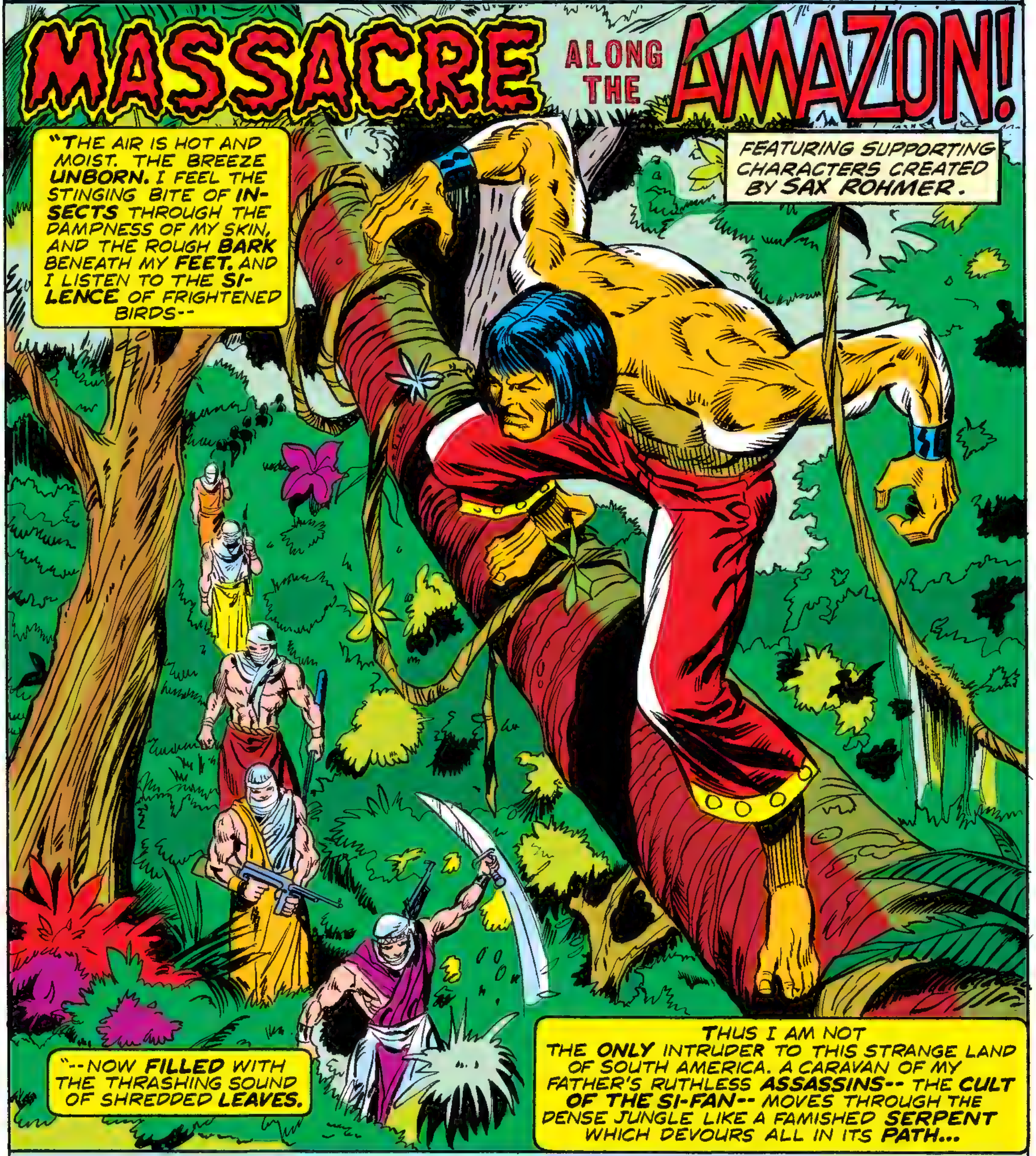

MASTER OF KUNG FU
MARVEL COMICS GROUP
APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY
25¢
CC
24
JAN
02449
THE HANDS OF SHANG-CHI,
MASTER OF KUNG FU
TM
TM
THE SON OF FU MANCHU CAUGHT IN A DEADLY CROSS-FIRE!
MARTIAL-ARTS ACTION-- AS ONLY MIGHTY MARVEL CAN PRESENT IT!
"THE NIGHT OF THE ASSASSIN!"

"Call me Shang-Chi, as my *father* did, when he raised me and molded my mind and my body in the vacuum of his Honan, China, retreat. I learned many things from my father: That my name means "The Rising and Advancing of a Spirit," that my body could be forged into a living weapon through the discipline of kung fu, and that it might be used for the murder of a man called Dr. Petrie.

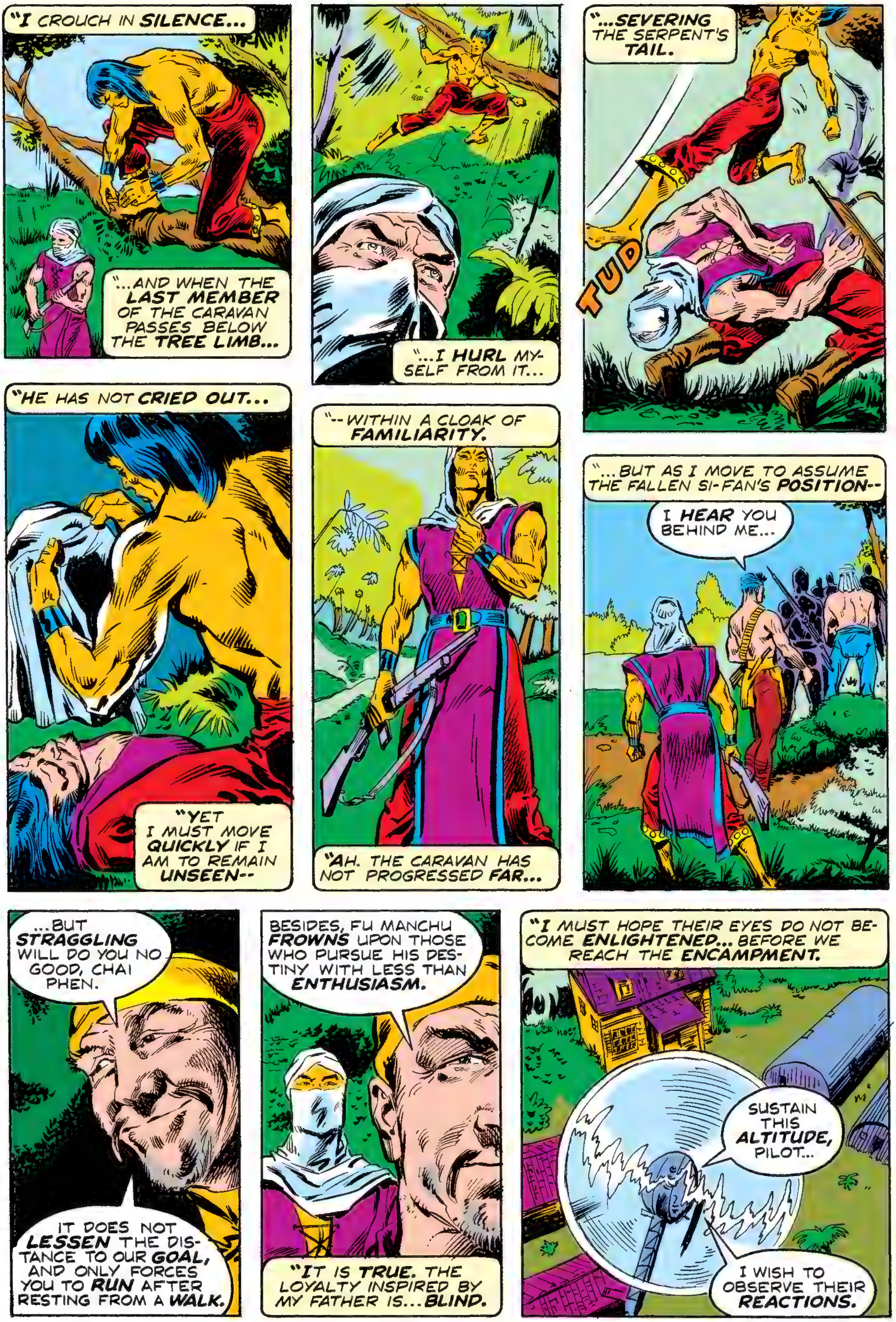
"Since then, I have learned that my father is **Dr. Fu Manchu,** the most insidiously evil man on earth... and that to *honor* him would bring nothing but *dishonor* to the spirit of my *name.*"

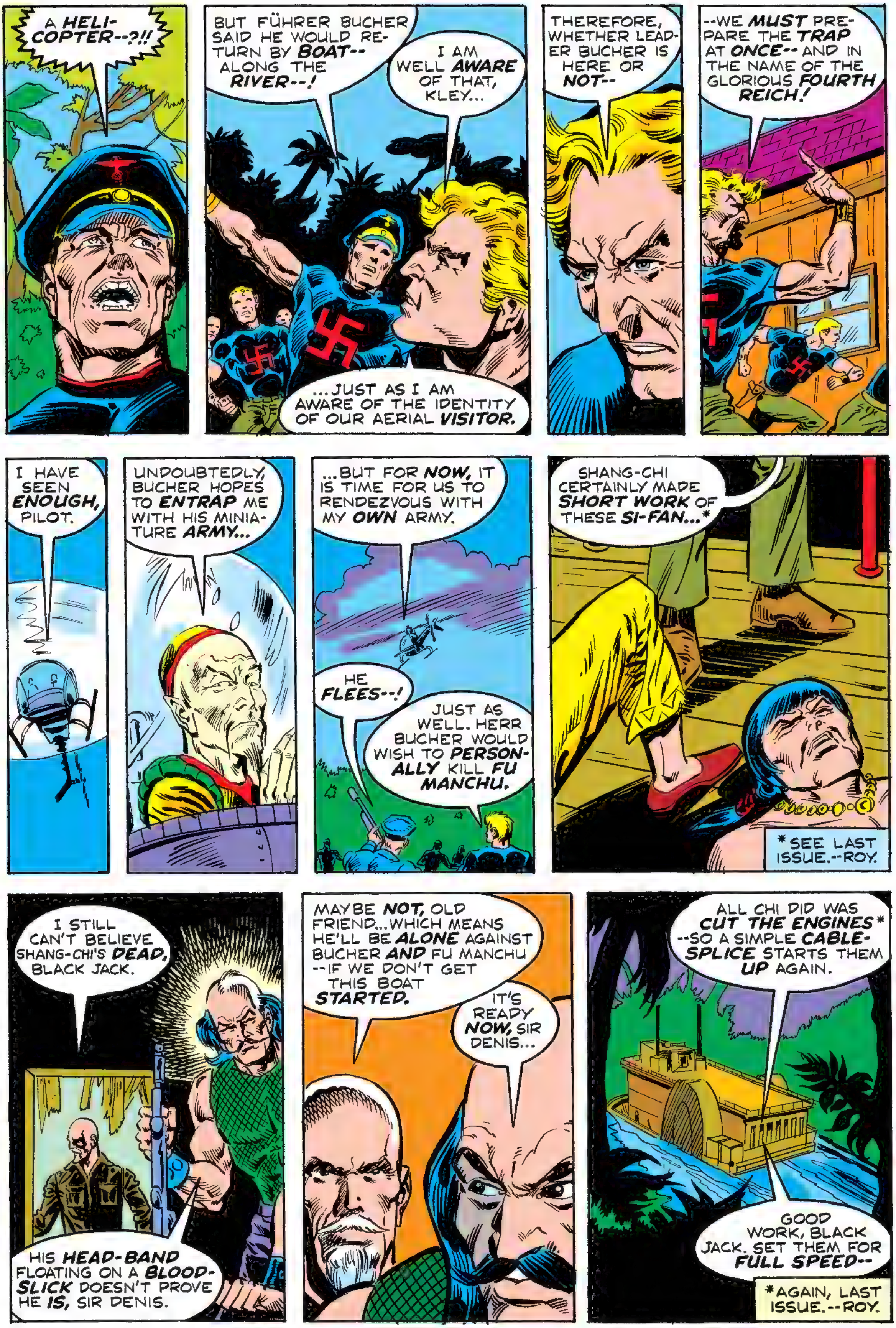
STAN LEE PRESENTS: MASTER OF KUNG FU!™

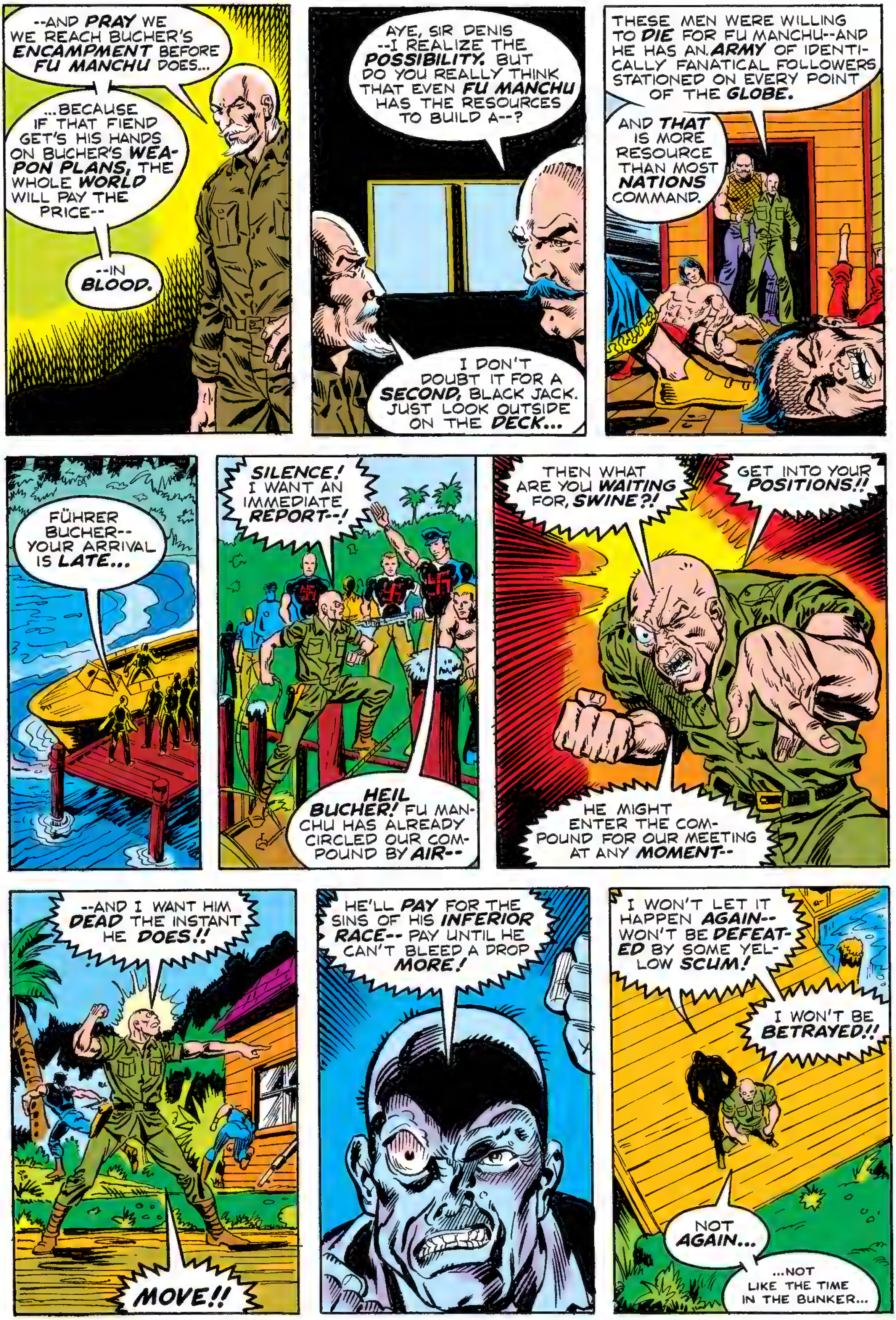
MASSACRE ALONG THE AMAZON!

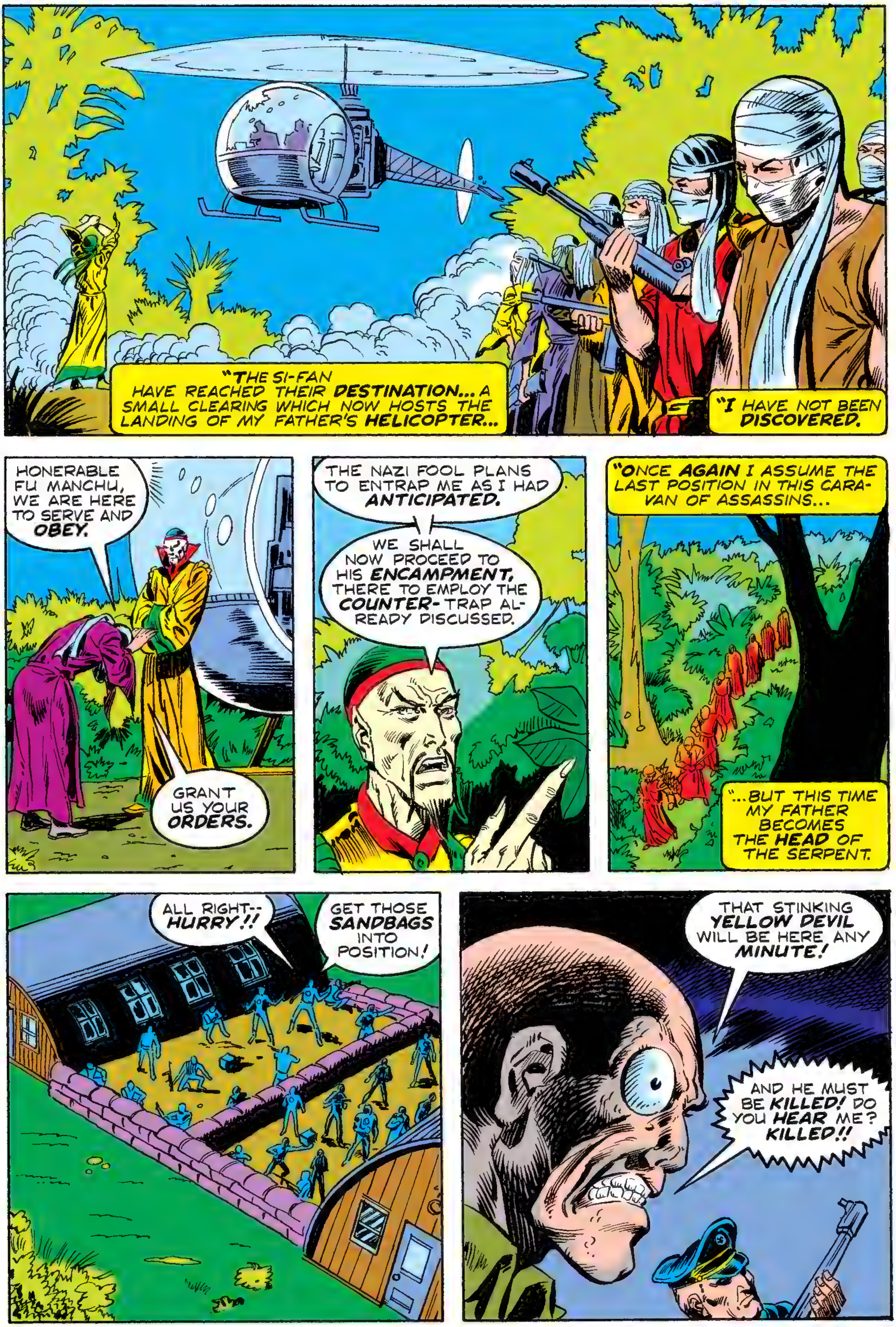

"THE AIR IS HOT AND MOIST. THE BREEZE UNBORN. I FEEL THE STINGING BITE OF INSECTS THROUGH THE DAMPNESS OF MY SKIN, AND THE ROUGH BARK BENEATH MY FEET. AND I LISTEN TO THE SILENCE OF FRIGHTENED BIRDS--
FEATURING SUPPORTING CHARACTERS CREATED BY SAX ROHMER.
"--NOW FILLED WITH THE THRASHING SOUND OF SHREDDED LEAVES.
THUS I AM NOT THE ONLY INTRUDER TO THIS STRANGE LAND OF SOUTH AMERICA. A CARAVAN OF MY FATHER'S RUTHLESS ASSASSINS-- THE CULT OF THE SI-FAN-- MOVES THROUGH THE DENSE JUNGLE LIKE A FAMISHED SERPENT WHICH DEVOURS ALL IN ITS PATH...

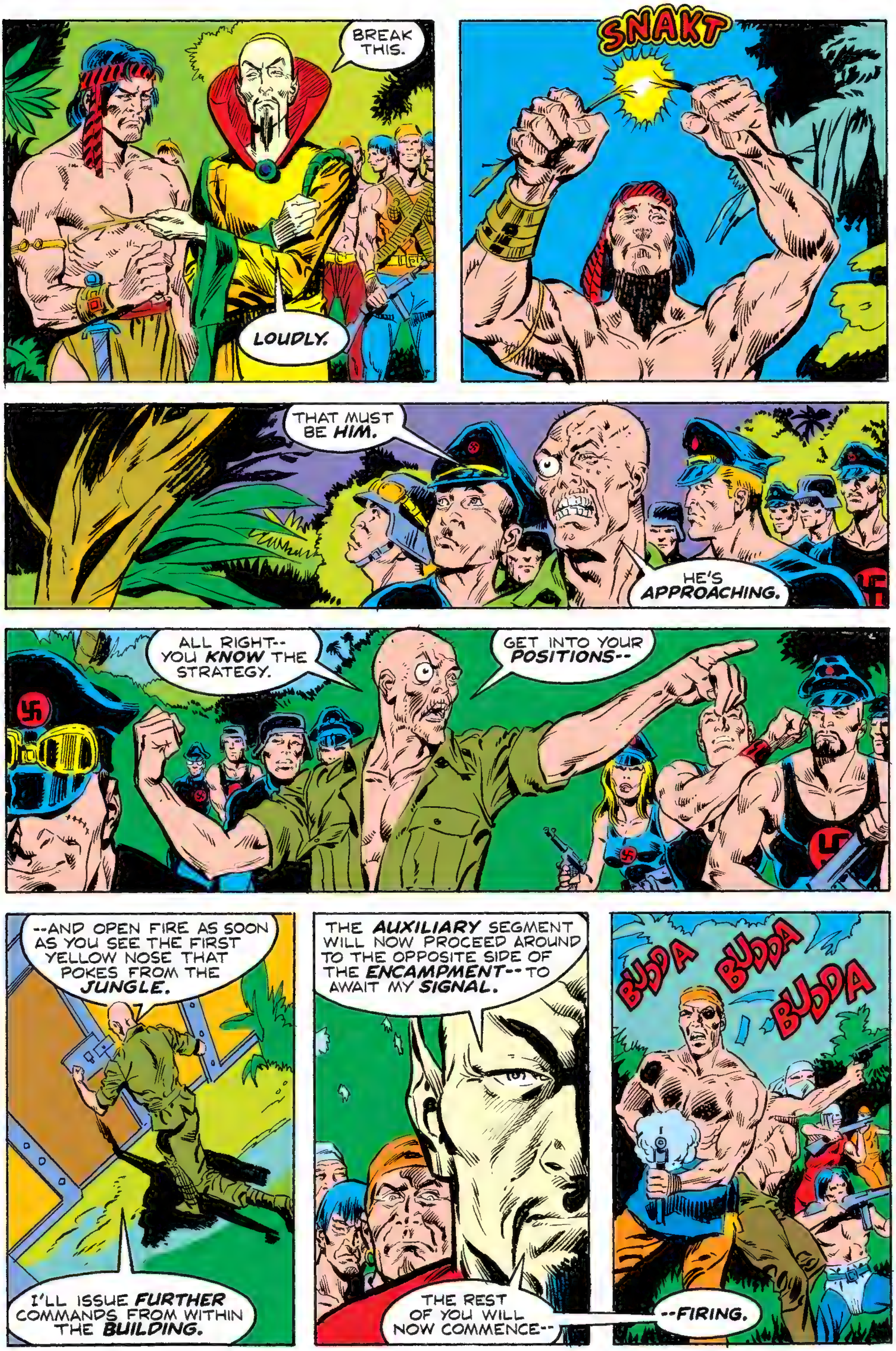
DOUG MOENCH WRITER | **MILGROM, STARLIN, WEISS & SIMONSON** PENCILLERS | **SAL TRAPANI** INKER | **DAVE HUNT,** LETTERER **P. GOLDBERG,** COLORIST | **ROY THOMAS** EDITOR

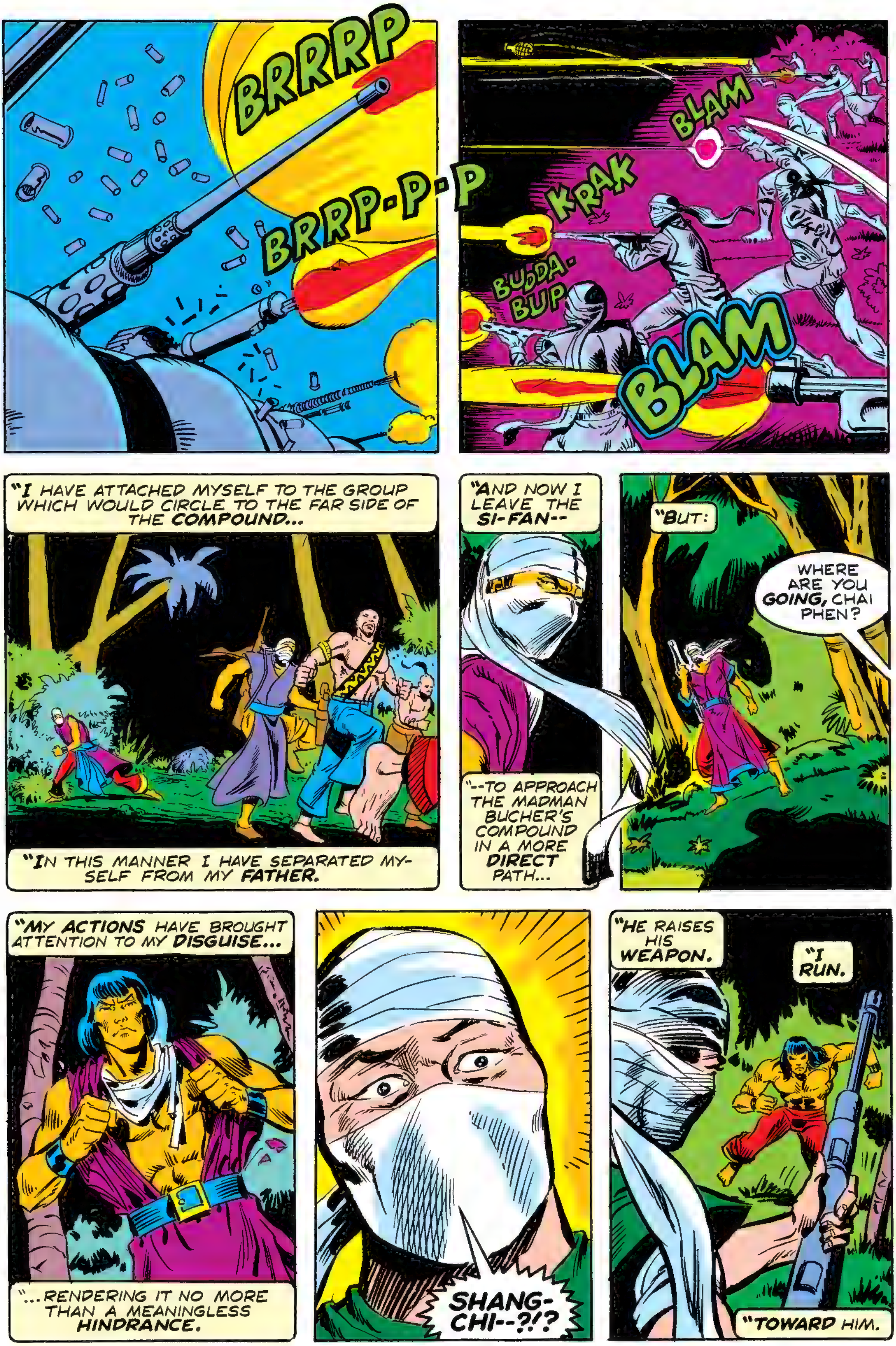

"I CROUCH IN SILENCE...
"...AND WHEN THE LAST MEMBER OF THE CARAVAN PASSES BELOW THE TREE LIMB...
"...I HURL MYSELF FROM IT...
"...SEVERING THE SERPENT'S TAIL.
TUD
"HE HAS NOT CRIED OUT...
"YET I MUST MOVE QUICKLY IF I AM TO REMAIN UNSEEN--
"--WITHIN A CLOAK OF FAMILIARITY.
"AH. THE CARAVAN HAS NOT PROGRESSED FAR...
"...BUT AS I MOVE TO ASSUME THE FALLEN SI-FAN'S POSITION--
I HEAR YOU BEHIND ME...
...BUT STRAGGLING WILL DO YOU NO GOOD, CHAI PHEN.
IT DOES NOT LESSEN THE DISTANCE TO OUR GOAL, AND ONLY FORCES YOU TO RUN AFTER RESTING FROM A WALK.
BESIDES, FU MANCHU FROWNS UPON THOSE WHO PURSUE HIS DESTINY WITH LESS THAN ENTHUSIASM.
"IT IS TRUE. THE LOYALTY INSPIRED BY MY FATHER IS... BLIND.
"I MUST HOPE THEIR EYES DO NOT BECOME ENLIGHTENED... BEFORE WE REACH THE ENCAMPMENT.
SUSTAIN THIS ALTITUDE, PILOT...
I WISH TO OBSERVE THEIR REACTIONS.

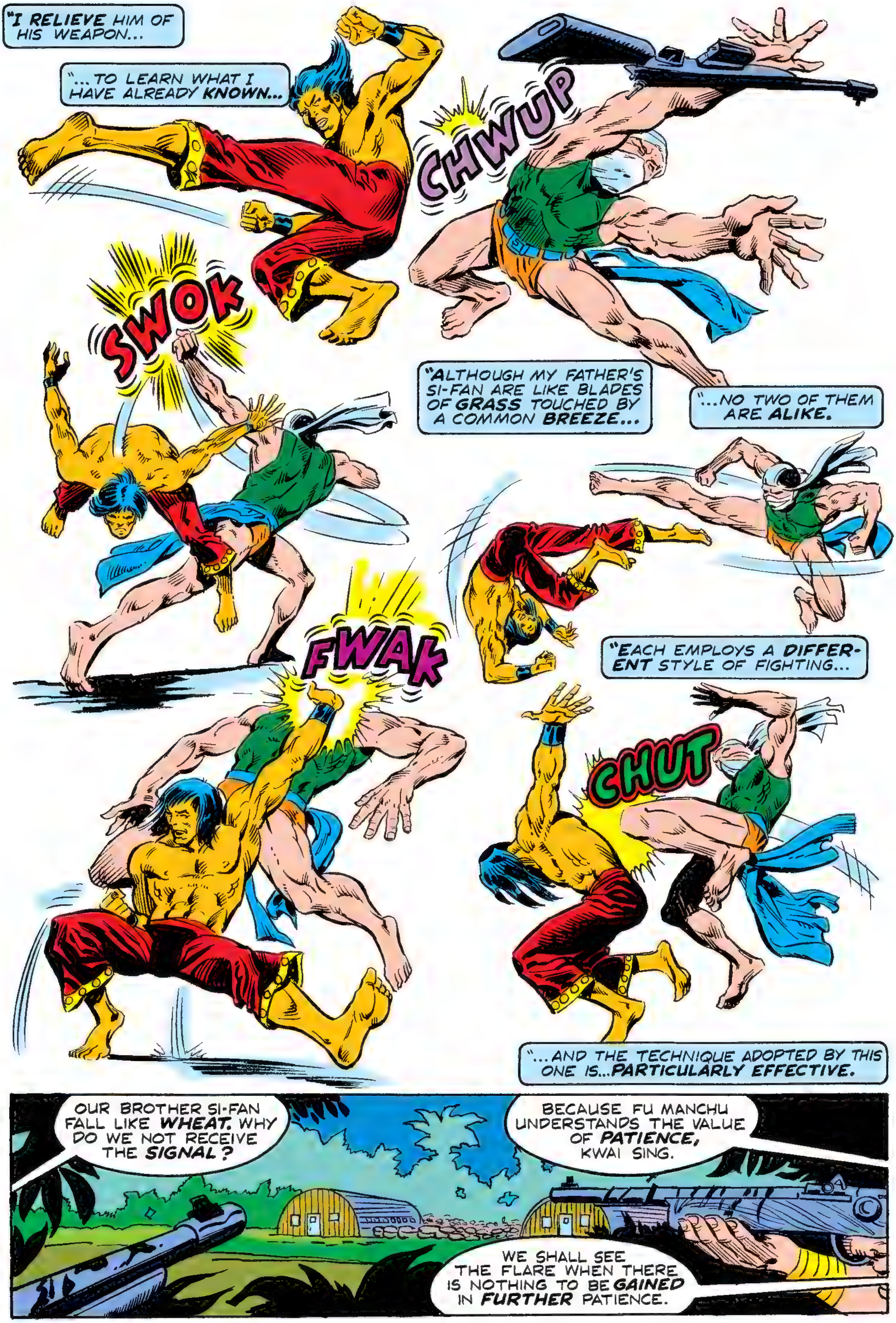

A HELI-COPTER--?!!
BUT FÜHRER BUCHER SAID HE WOULD RETURN BY BOAT-- ALONG THE RIVER--!
I AM WELL AWARE OF THAT, KLEY...
...JUST AS I AM AWARE OF THE IDENTITY OF OUR AERIAL VISITOR.
THEREFORE, WHETHER LEADER BUCHER IS HERE OR NOT--
--WE MUST PREPARE THE TRAP AT ONCE-- AND IN THE NAME OF THE GLORIOUS FOURTH REICH!
I HAVE SEEN ENOUGH, PILOT.
UNDOUBTEDLY, BUCHER HOPES TO ENTRAP ME WITH HIS MINIATURE ARMY...
...BUT FOR NOW, IT IS TIME FOR US TO RENDEZVOUS WITH MY OWN ARMY.
HE FLEES--!
JUST AS WELL. HERR BUCHER WOULD WISH TO PERSONALLY KILL FU MANCHU.
SHANG-CHI CERTAINLY MADE SHORT WORK OF THESE SI-FAN...*
*SEE LAST ISSUE.--ROY.
I STILL CAN'T BELIEVE SHANG-CHI'S DEAD, BLACK JACK.
HIS HEAD-BAND FLOATING ON A BLOOD-SLICK DOESN'T PROVE HE IS, SIR DENIS.
MAYBE NOT, OLD FRIEND...WHICH MEANS HE'LL BE ALONE AGAINST BUCHER AND FU MANCHU --IF WE DON'T GET THIS BOAT STARTED.
IT'S READY NOW, SIR DENIS...
ALL CHI DID WAS CUT THE ENGINES* --SO A SIMPLE CABLE-SPLICE STARTS THEM UP AGAIN.
GOOD WORK, BLACK JACK. SET THEM FOR FULL SPEED--
*AGAIN, LAST ISSUE.--ROY.

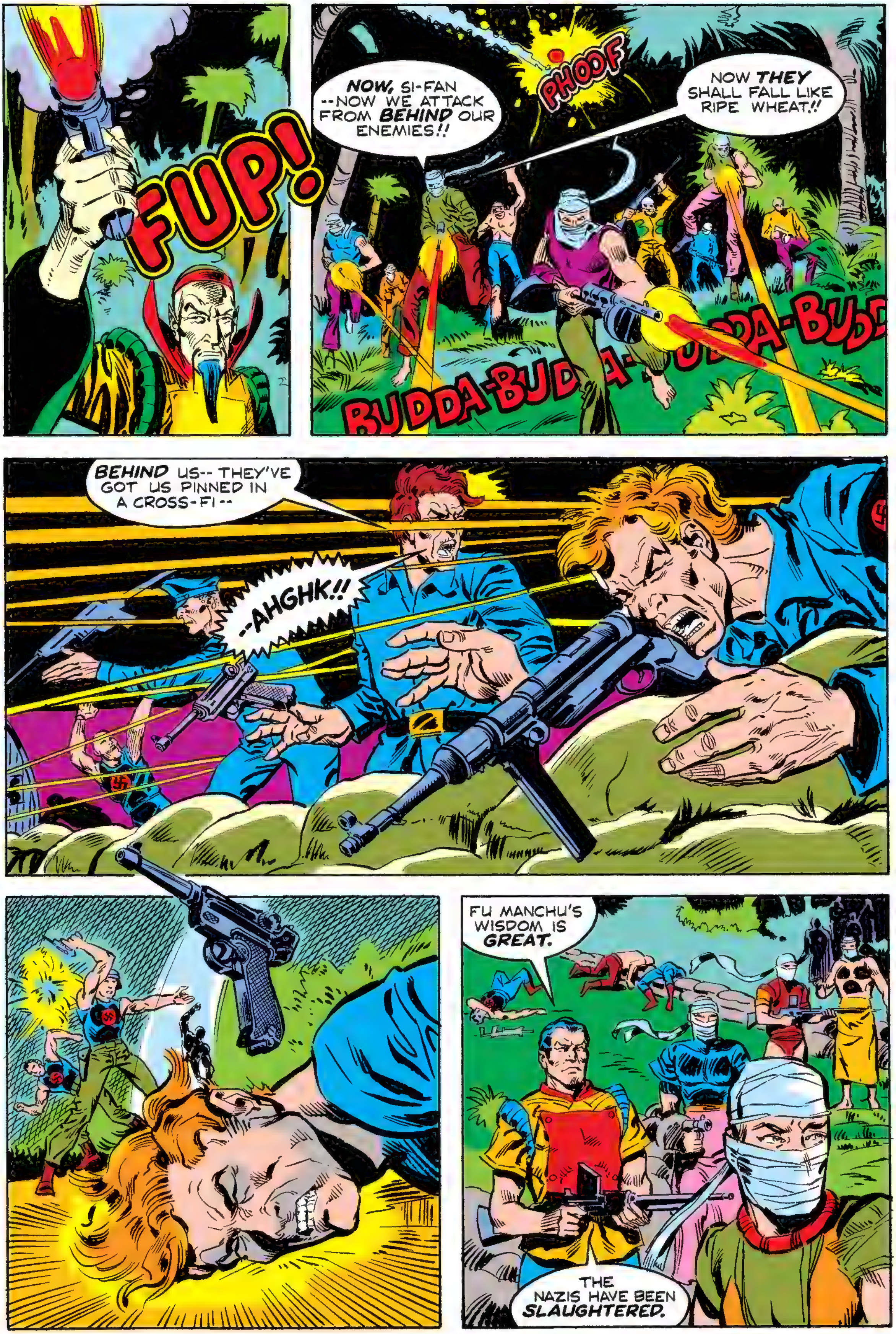

--AND PRAY WE WE REACH BUCHER'S ENCAMPMENT BEFORE FU MANCHU DOES...
...BECAUSE IF THAT FIEND GET'S HIS HANDS ON BUCHER'S WEAPON PLANS, THE WHOLE WORLD WILL PAY THE PRICE--
--IN BLOOD.
AYE, SIR DENIS --I REALIZE THE POSSIBILITY. BUT DO YOU REALLY THINK THAT EVEN FU MANCHU HAS THE RESOURCES TO BUILD A--?
I DON'T DOUBT IT FOR A SECOND, BLACK JACK. JUST LOOK OUTSIDE ON THE DECK...
THESE MEN WERE WILLING TO DIE FOR FU MANCHU--AND HE HAS AN ARMY OF IDENTICALLY FANATICAL FOLLOWERS STATIONED ON EVERY POINT OF THE GLOBE.
AND THAT IS MORE RESOURCE THAN MOST NATIONS COMMAND.
FÜHRER BUCHER-- YOUR ARRIVAL IS LATE...
SILENCE! I WANT AN IMMEDIATE REPORT--!
HEIL BUCHER! FU MANCHU HAS ALREADY CIRCLED OUR COMPOUND BY AIR--
THEN WHAT ARE YOU WAITING FOR, SWINE?!
GET INTO YOUR POSITIONS!!
HE MIGHT ENTER THE COMPOUND FOR OUR MEETING AT ANY MOMENT--
--AND I WANT HIM DEAD THE INSTANT HE DOES!!
MOVE!!
HE'LL PAY FOR THE SINS OF HIS INFERIOR RACE-- PAY UNTIL HE CAN'T BLEED A DROP MORE!
I WON'T LET IT HAPPEN AGAIN-- WON'T BE DEFEATED BY SOME YELLOW SCUM!
I WON'T BE BETRAYED!!
NOT AGAIN...
...NOT LIKE THE TIME IN THE BUNKER...

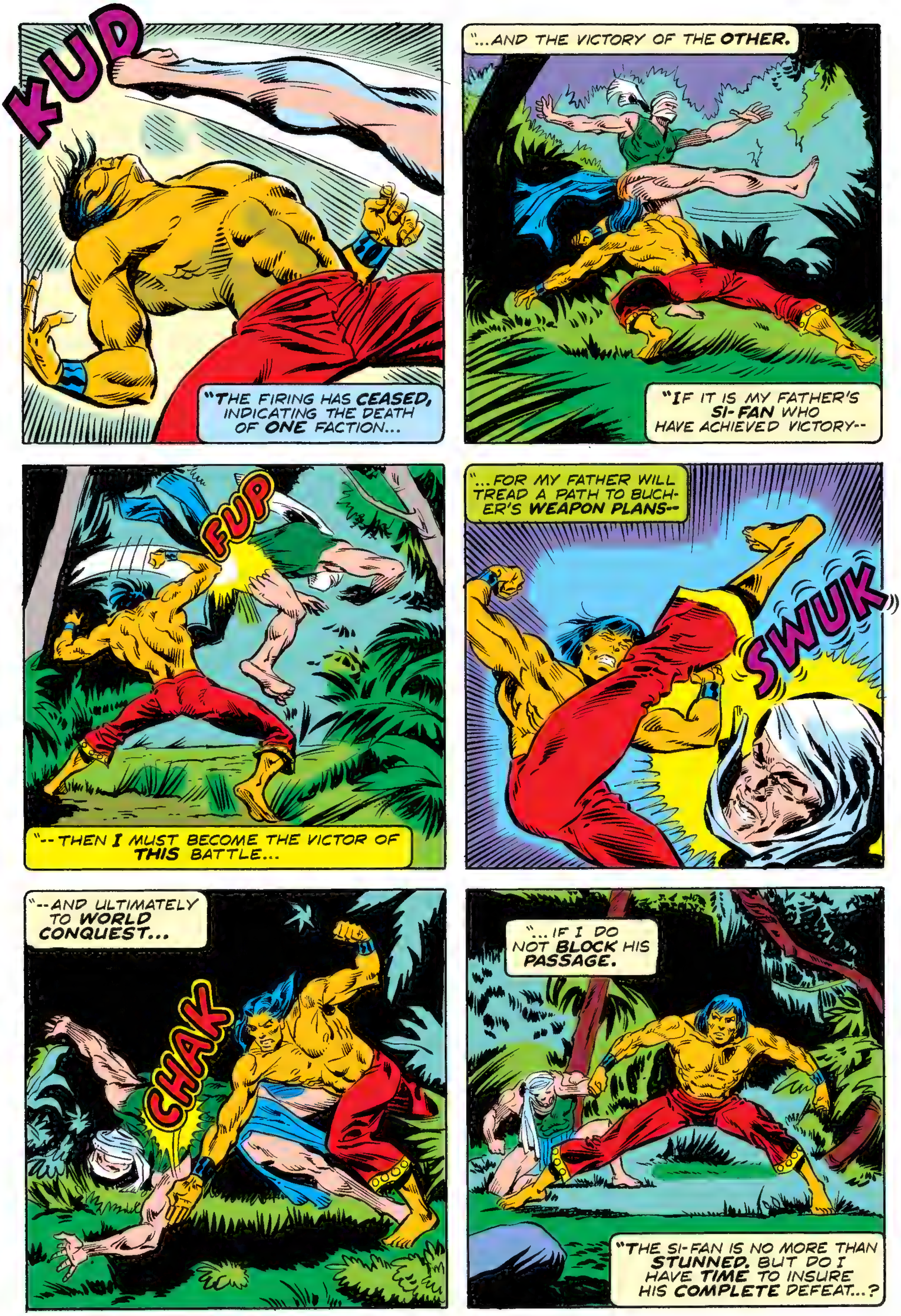

"THE SI-FAN HAVE REACHED THEIR DESTINATION... A SMALL CLEARING WHICH NOW HOSTS THE LANDING OF MY FATHER'S HELICOPTER...
"I HAVE NOT BEEN DISCOVERED.
HONERABLE FU MANCHU, WE ARE HERE TO SERVE AND OBEY.
GRANT US YOUR ORDERS.
THE NAZI FOOL PLANS TO ENTRAP ME AS I HAD ANTICIPATED.
WE SHALL NOW PROCEED TO HIS ENCAMPMENT, THERE TO EMPLOY THE COUNTER-TRAP ALREADY DISCUSSED.
"ONCE AGAIN I ASSUME THE LAST POSITION IN THIS CARAVAN OF ASSASSINS...
"...BUT THIS TIME MY FATHER BECOMES THE HEAD OF THE SERPENT.
ALL RIGHT-- HURRY!!
GET THOSE SANDBAGS INTO POSITION!
THAT STINKING YELLOW DEVIL WILL BE HERE ANY MINUTE!
AND HE MUST BE KILLED! DO YOU HEAR ME? KILLED!!

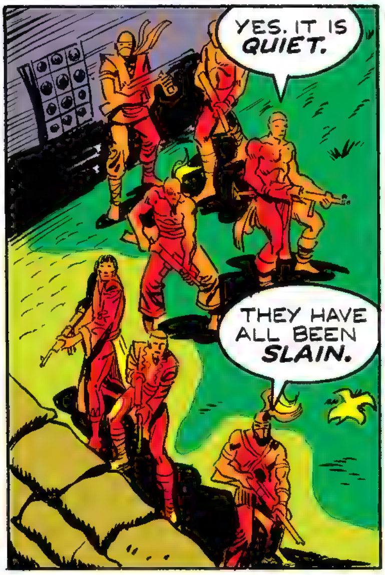

BREAK THIS.
LOUDLY.
SNAKT
THAT MUST BE HIM.
HE'S APPROACHING.
ALL RIGHT-- YOU KNOW THE STRATEGY.
GET INTO YOUR POSITIONS--
--AND OPEN FIRE AS SOON AS YOU SEE THE FIRST YELLOW NOSE THAT POKES FROM THE JUNGLE.
I'LL ISSUE FURTHER COMMANDS FROM WITHIN THE BUILDING.
THE AUXILIARY SEGMENT WILL NOW PROCEED AROUND TO THE OPPOSITE SIDE OF THE ENCAMPMENT-- TO AWAIT MY SIGNAL.
THE REST OF YOU WILL NOW COMMENCE--
--FIRING.
BUDDA BUDDA BUDDA

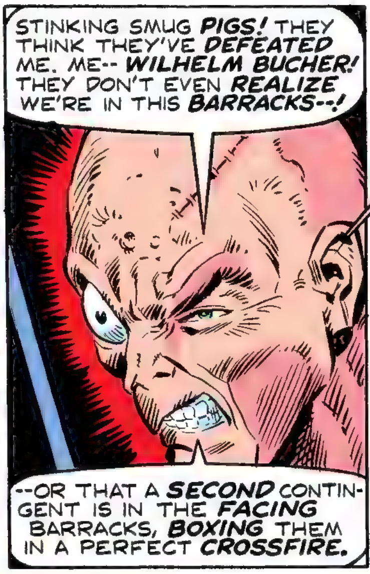

BRRRP
BRRRP-P-P
BLAM
KRAK
BUDDA-BUP
BLAM
"I HAVE ATTACHED MYSELF TO THE GROUP WHICH WOULD CIRCLE TO THE FAR SIDE OF THE COMPOUND...
"IN THIS MANNER I HAVE SEPARATED MYSELF FROM MY FATHER.
"AND NOW I LEAVE THE SI-FAN--
"--TO APPROACH THE MADMAN BUCHER'S COMPOUND IN A MORE DIRECT PATH...
"BUT:
WHERE ARE YOU GOING, CHAI PHEN?
"MY ACTIONS HAVE BROUGHT ATTENTION TO MY DISGUISE...
"...RENDERING IT NO MORE THAN A MEANINGLESS HINDRANCE.
SHANG-CHI--?!?
"HE RAISES HIS WEAPON.
"I RUN.
"TOWARD HIM.

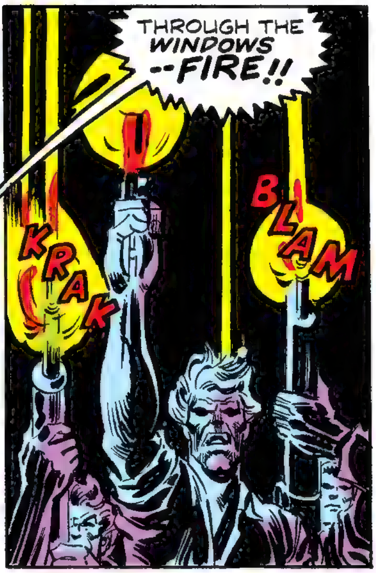

"I RELIEVE HIM OF HIS WEAPON...
"...TO LEARN WHAT I HAVE ALREADY KNOWN...
CHWUP
SWOK
"ALTHOUGH MY FATHER'S SI-FAN ARE LIKE BLADES OF GRASS TOUCHED BY A COMMON BREEZE...
"...NO TWO OF THEM ARE ALIKE.
"EACH EMPLOYS A DIFFERENT STYLE OF FIGHTING...
FWAK
CHUT
"...AND THE TECHNIQUE ADOPTED BY THIS ONE IS...PARTICULARLY EFFECTIVE.
OUR BROTHER SI-FAN FALL LIKE WHEAT. WHY DO WE NOT RECEIVE THE SIGNAL?
BECAUSE FU MANCHU UNDERSTANDS THE VALUE OF PATIENCE, KWAI SING.
WE SHALL SEE THE FLARE WHEN THERE IS NOTHING TO BE GAINED IN FURTHER PATIENCE.

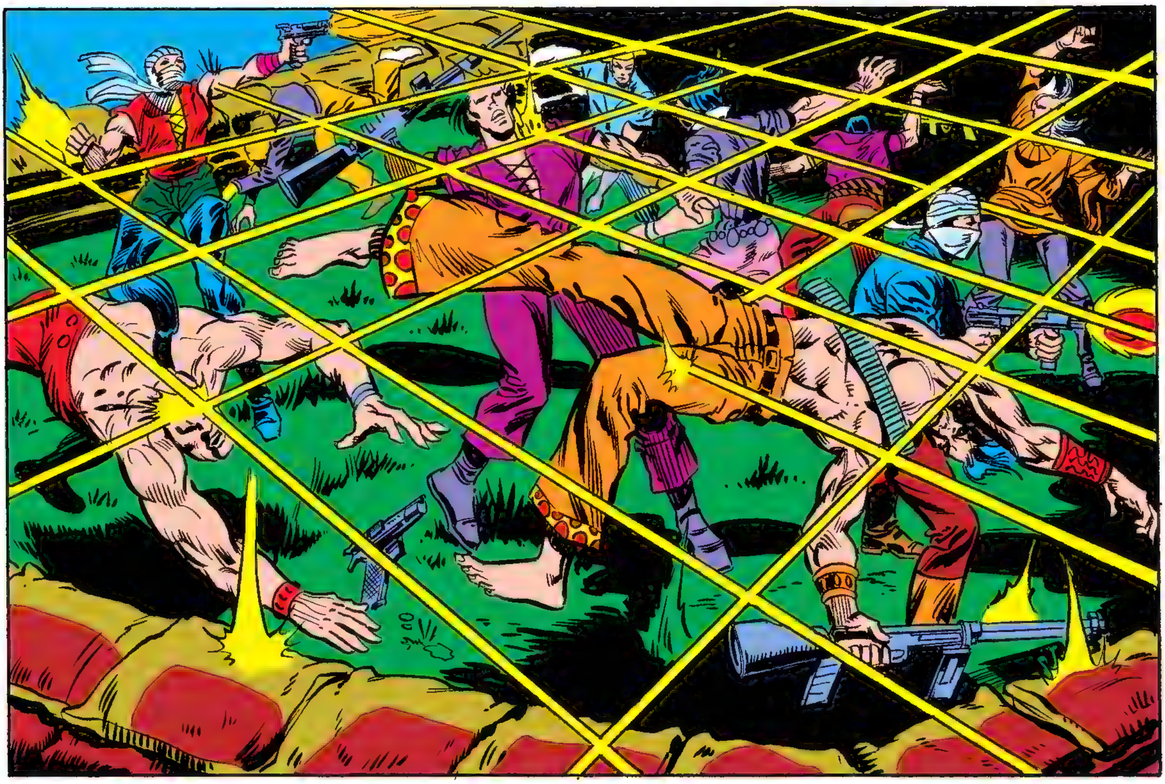

FUP!
PHOOF
NOW, SI-FAN --NOW WE ATTACK FROM BEHIND OUR ENEMIES!!
NOW THEY SHALL FALL LIKE RIPE WHEAT!!
BUDDA-BUD A- DA-BUDD
BEHIND US-- THEY'VE GOT US PINNED IN A CROSS-FI--
-AHGHK!!
FU MANCHU'S WISDOM IS GREAT.
THE NAZIS HAVE BEEN SLAUGHTERED.

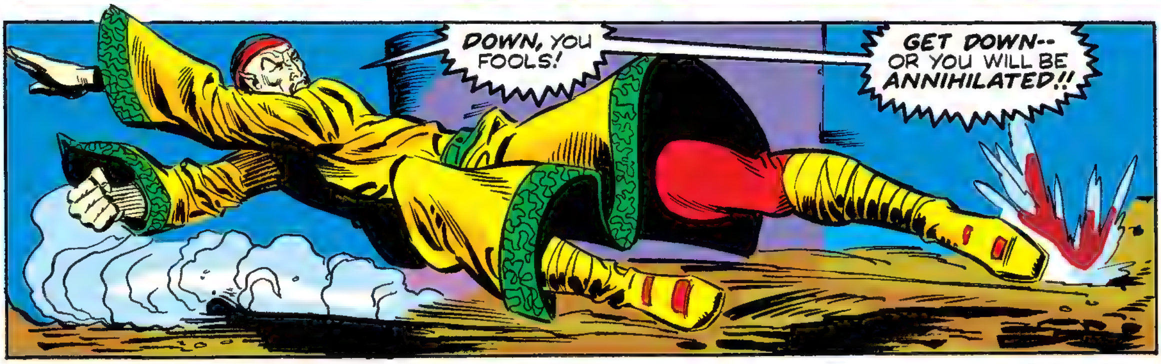

KUD
"THE FIRING HAS CEASED, INDICATING THE DEATH OF ONE FACTION...
"...AND THE VICTORY OF THE OTHER.
"IF IT IS MY FATHER'S SI-FAN WHO HAVE ACHIEVED VICTORY--
FUP
"--THEN I MUST BECOME THE VICTOR OF THIS BATTLE...
"...FOR MY FATHER WILL TREAD A PATH TO BUCHER'S WEAPON PLANS--
SWUK
"--AND ULTIMATELY TO WORLD CONQUEST...
CHAK
"...IF I DO NOT BLOCK HIS PASSAGE.
"THE SI-FAN IS NO MORE THAN STUNNED. BUT DO I HAVE TIME TO INSURE HIS COMPLETE DEFEAT...?

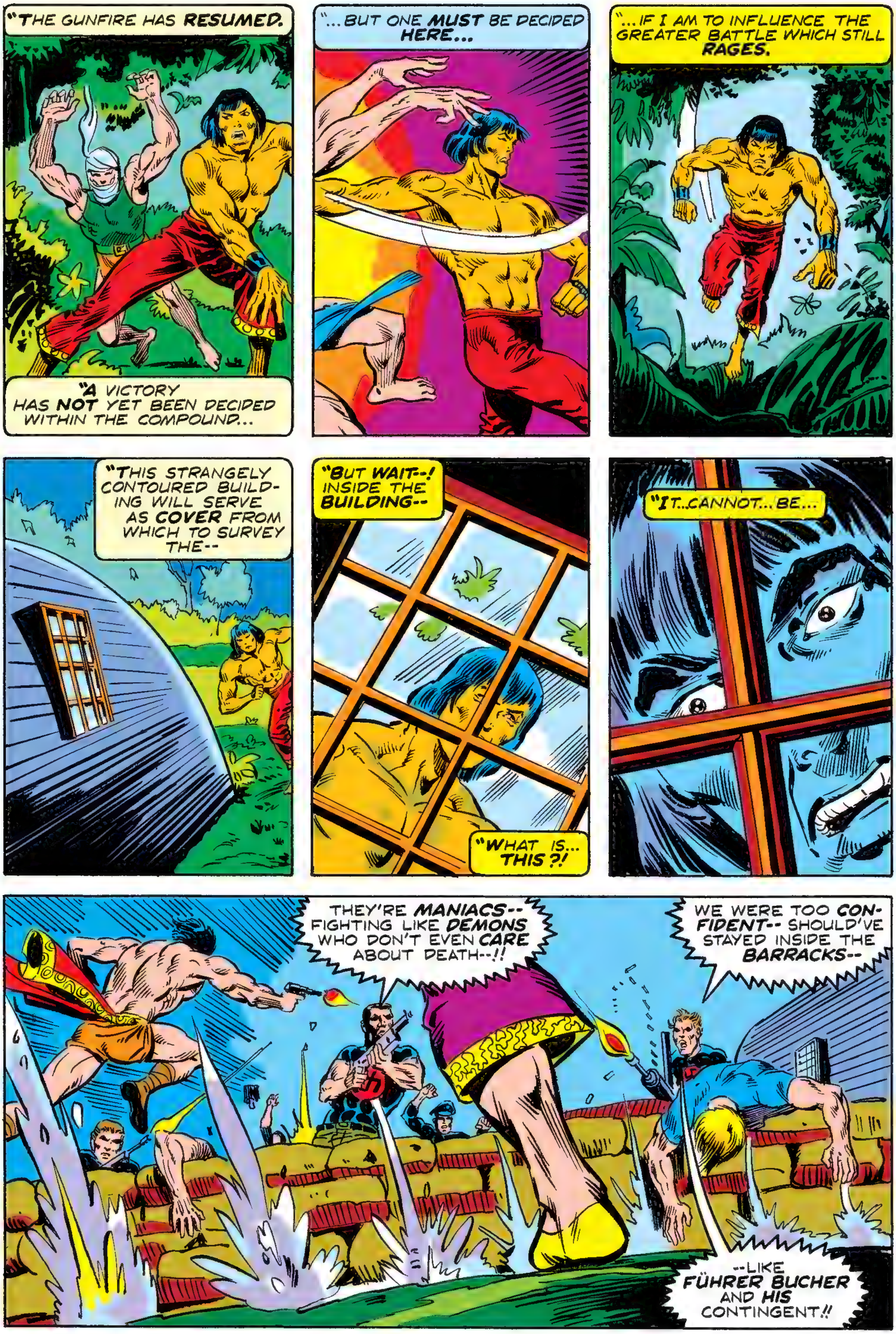

YES. IT IS *QUIET.*
THEY HAVE ALL BEEN *SLAIN.*

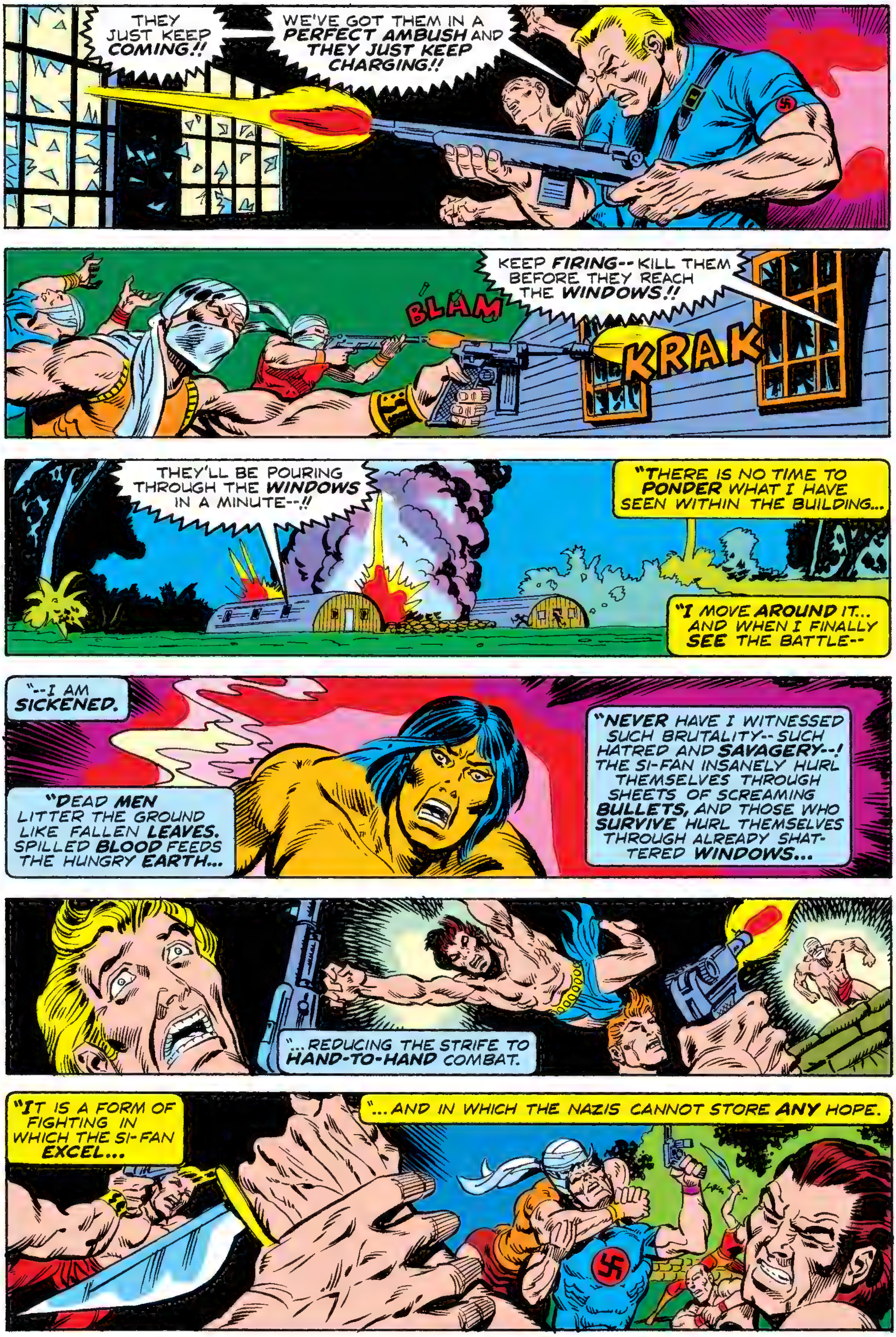

STINKING SMUG *PIGS!* THEY THINK THEY'VE *DEFEATED* ME. ME-- *WILHELM BUCHER!* THEY DON'T EVEN *REALIZE* WE'RE IN THIS *BARRACKS--!*
--OR THAT A *SECOND* CONTINGENT IS IN THE *FACING* BARRACKS, *BOXING* THEM IN A PERFECT *CROSSFIRE.*

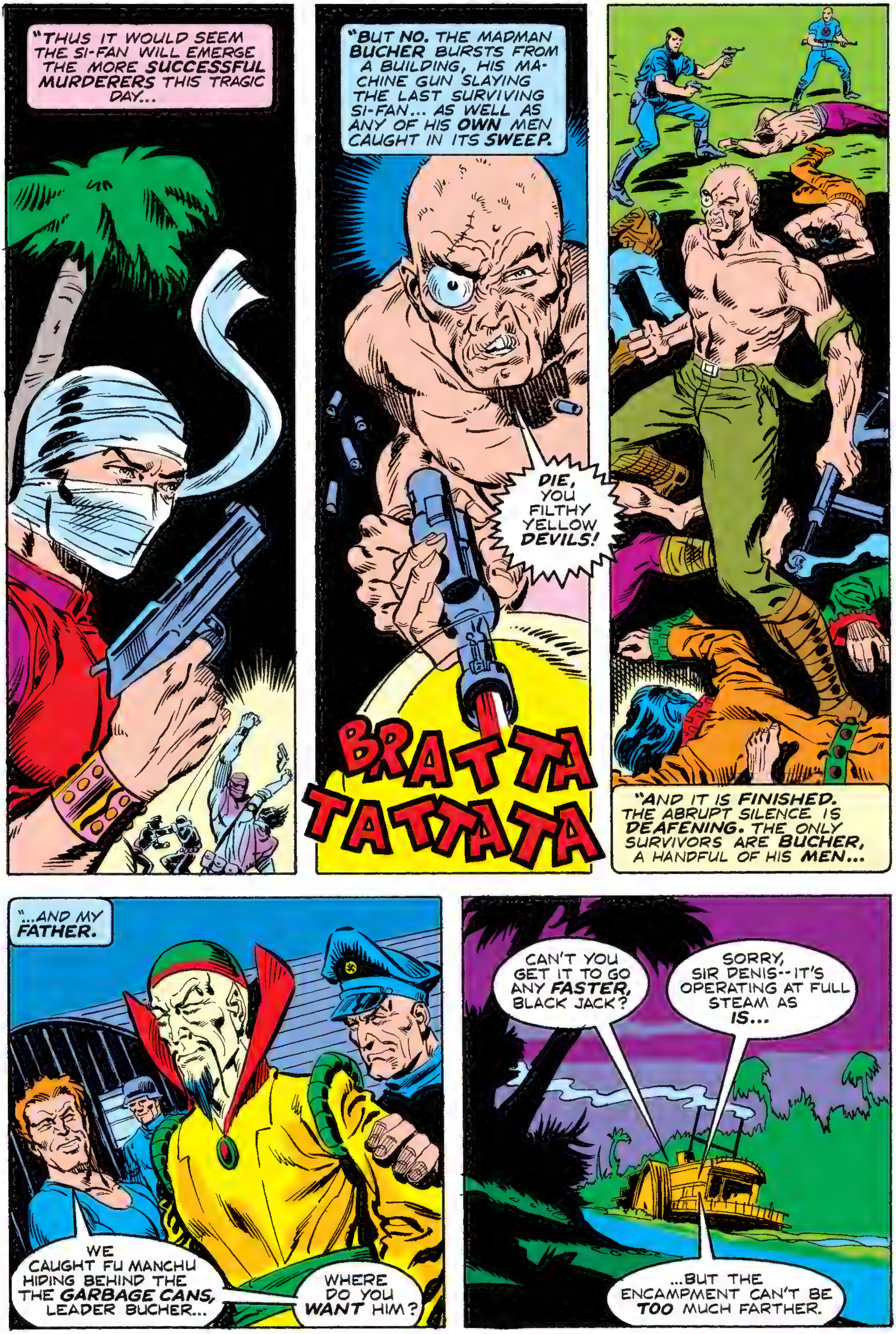

THROUGH THE *WINDOWS* --*FIRE!!*
KRAK
BLAM

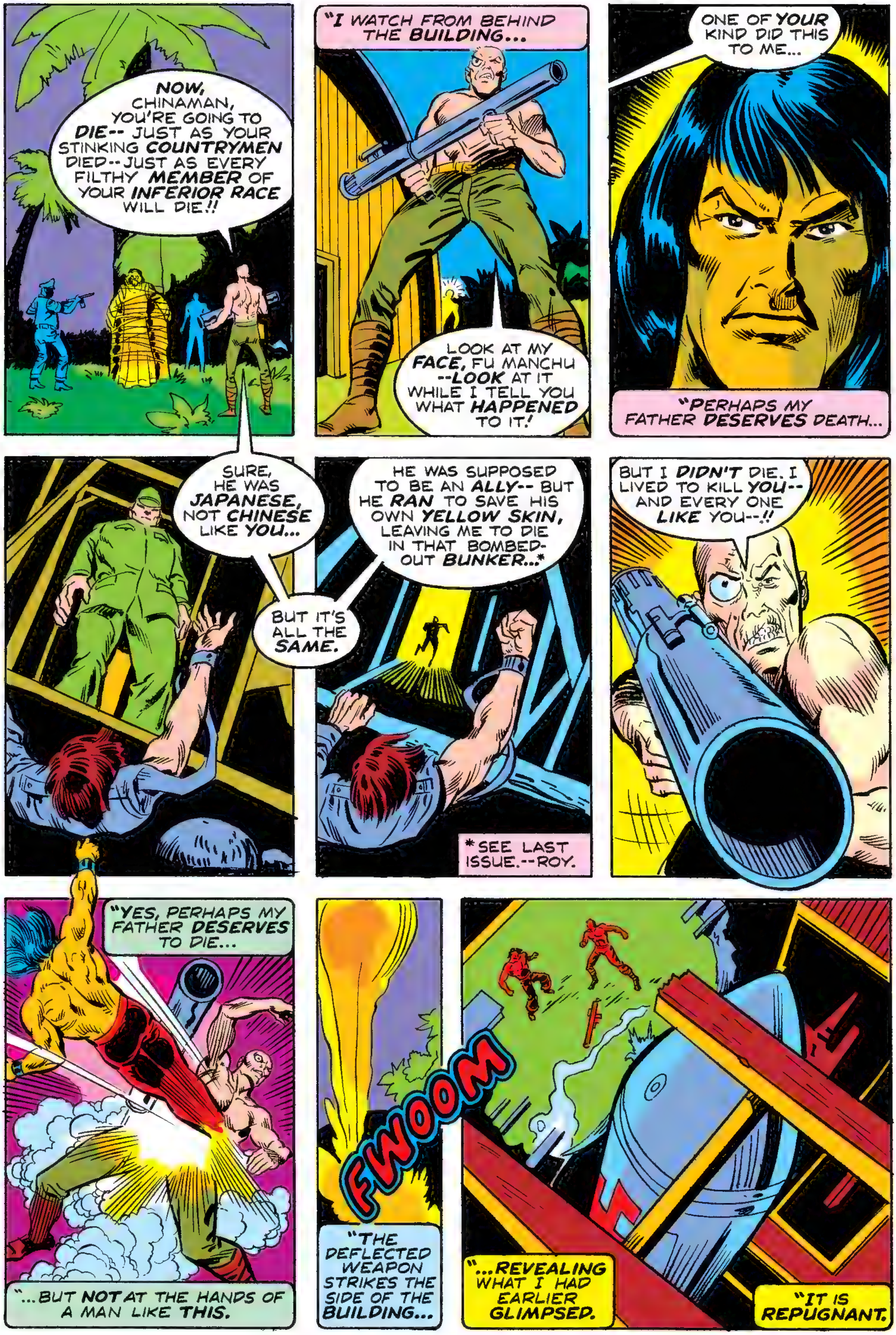


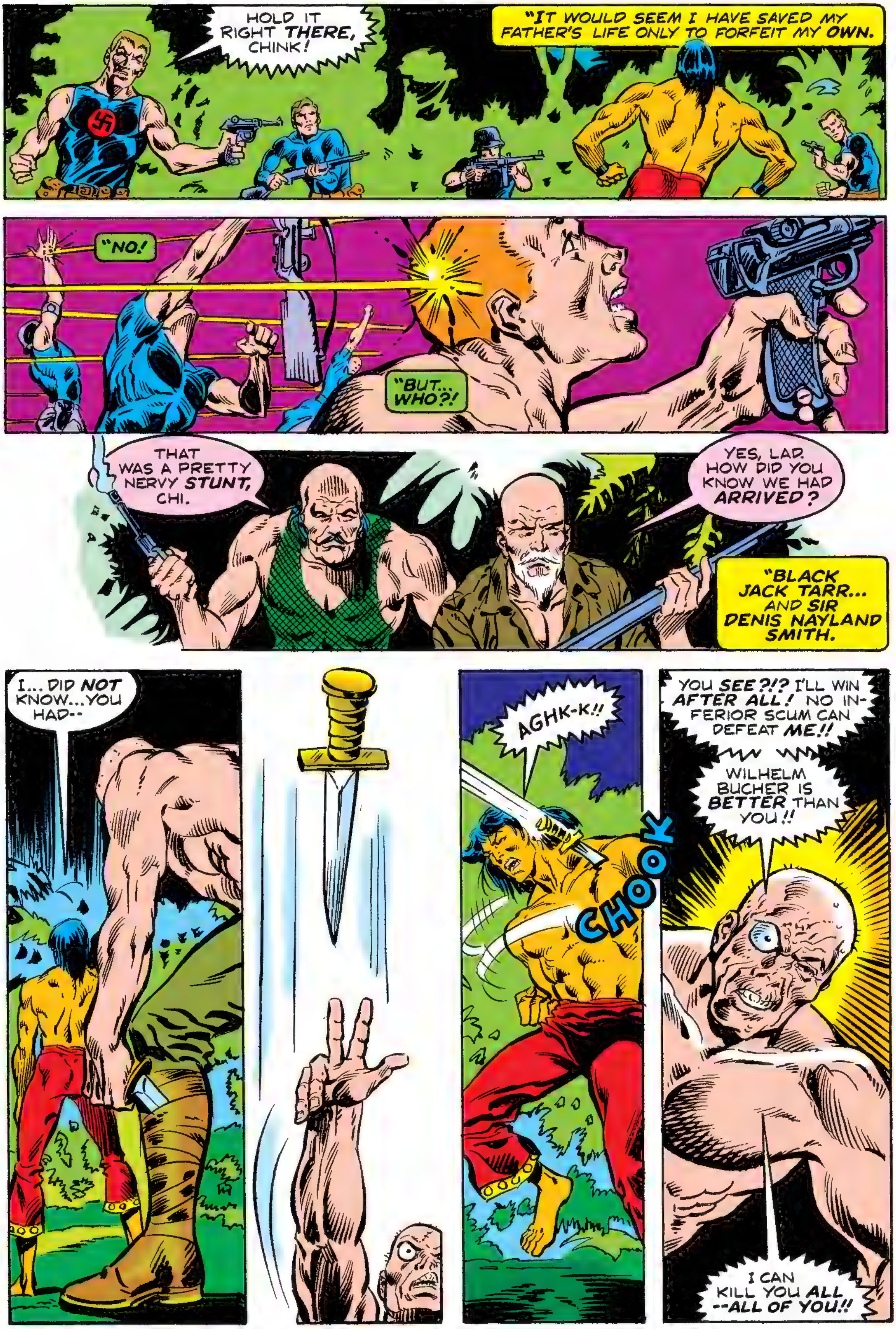

DOWN, YOU FOOLS!
GET DOWN-- OR YOU WILL BE *ANNIHILATED!!*

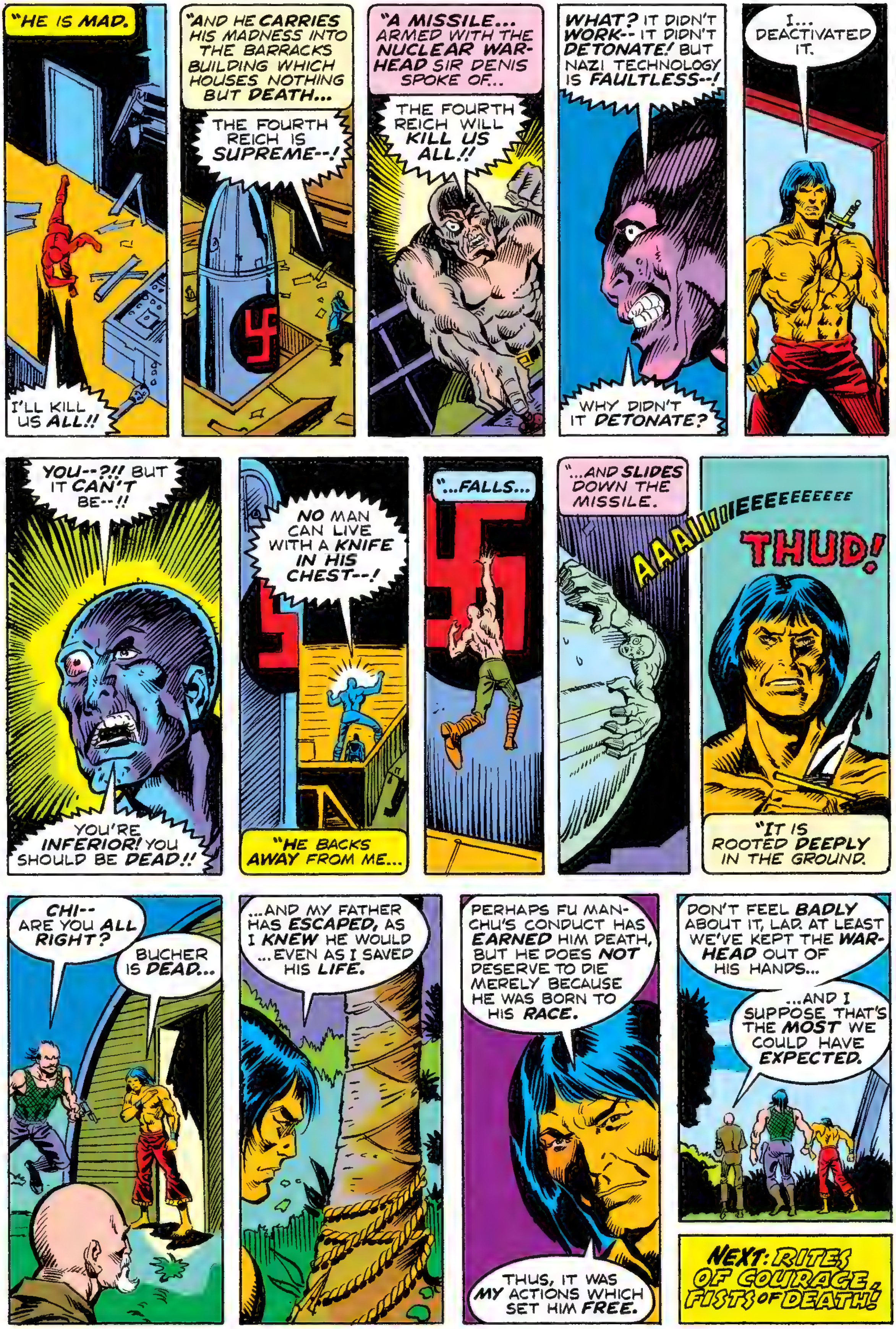

"THE GUNFIRE HAS RESUMED.
"A VICTORY HAS NOT YET BEEN DECIDED WITHIN THE COMPOUND...
"...BUT ONE MUST BE DECIDED HERE...
"...IF I AM TO INFLUENCE THE GREATER BATTLE WHICH STILL RAGES.
"THIS STRANGELY CONTOURED BUILDING WILL SERVE AS COVER FROM WHICH TO SURVEY THE--
"BUT WAIT--! INSIDE THE BUILDING--
"WHAT IS... THIS ?!
"IT...CANNOT... BE...
THEY'RE MANIACS--FIGHTING LIKE DEMONS WHO DON'T EVEN CARE ABOUT DEATH--!!
WE WERE TOO CONFIDENT-- SHOULD'VE STAYED INSIDE THE BARRACKS--
--LIKE FÜHRER BUCHER AND HIS CONTINGENT!!

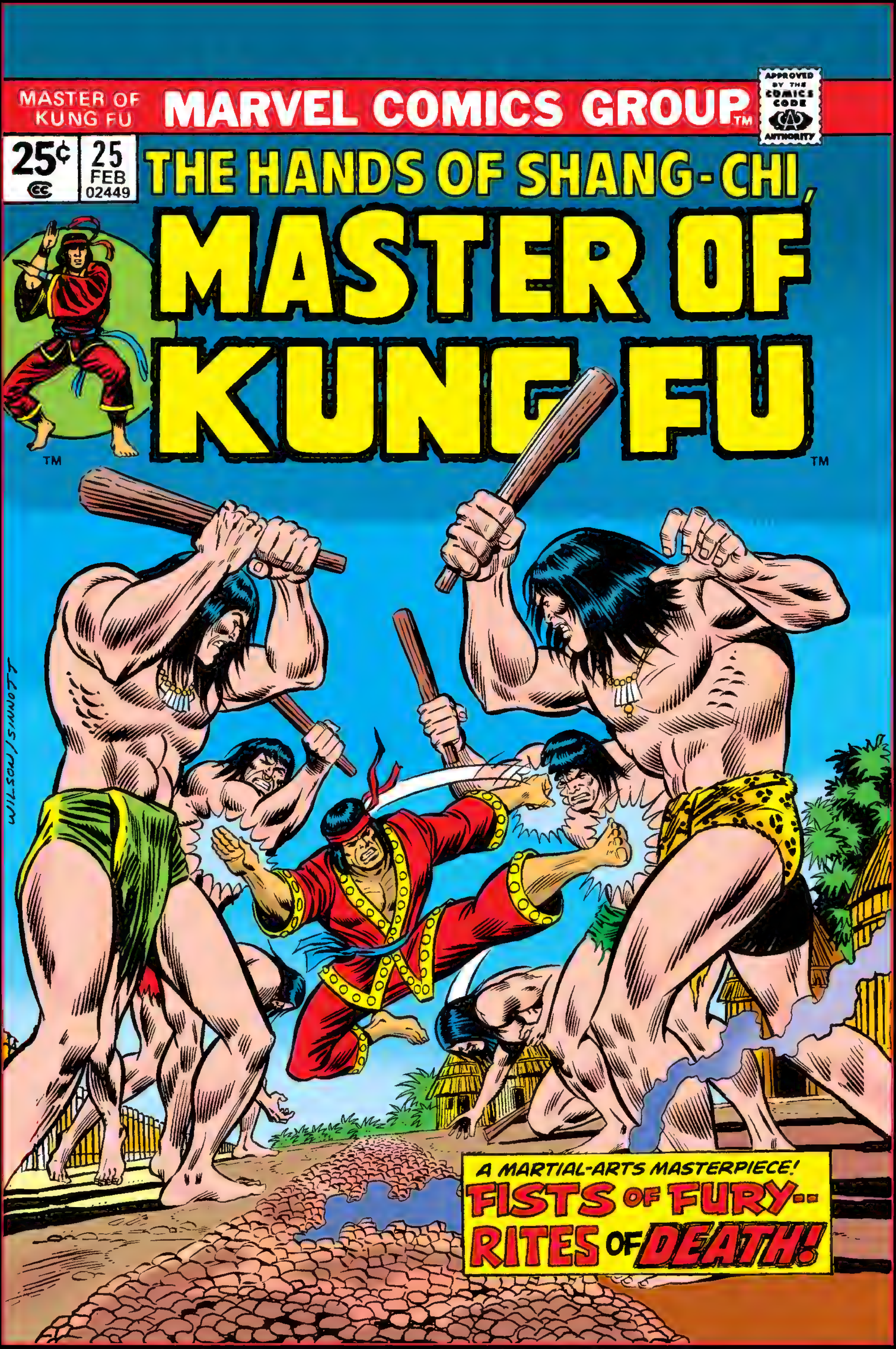

THEY JUST KEEP COMING!!
WE'VE GOT THEM IN A PERFECT AMBUSH AND THEY JUST KEEP CHARGING!!
KEEP FIRING-- KILL THEM BEFORE THEY REACH THE WINDOWS!!
BLAM
KRAK
THEY'LL BE POURING THROUGH THE WINDOWS IN A MINUTE--!!
"THERE IS NO TIME TO PONDER WHAT I HAVE SEEN WITHIN THE BUILDING...
"I MOVE AROUND IT... AND WHEN I FINALLY SEE THE BATTLE--
"--I AM SICKENED.
"DEAD MEN LITTER THE GROUND LIKE FALLEN LEAVES. SPILLED BLOOD FEEDS THE HUNGRY EARTH...
"NEVER HAVE I WITNESSED SUCH BRUTALITY-- SUCH HATRED AND SAVAGERY--! THE SI-FAN INSANELY HURL THEMSELVES THROUGH SHEETS OF SCREAMING BULLETS, AND THOSE WHO SURVIVE HURL THEMSELVES THROUGH ALREADY SHATTERED WINDOWS...
"...REDUCING THE STRIFE TO HAND-TO-HAND COMBAT.
"IT IS A FORM OF FIGHTING IN WHICH THE SI-FAN EXCEL...
"...AND IN WHICH THE NAZIS CANNOT STORE ANY HOPE.


"THUS IT WOULD SEEM THE SI-FAN WILL EMERGE THE MORE SUCCESSFUL MURDERERS THIS TRAGIC DAY...
"BUT NO. THE MADMAN BUCHER BURSTS FROM A BUILDING, HIS MACHINE GUN SLAYING THE LAST SURVIVING SI-FAN... AS WELL AS ANY OF HIS OWN MEN CAUGHT IN ITS SWEEP.
DIE, YOU FILTHY YELLOW DEVILS!
BRATTA TATTATA
"AND IT IS FINISHED. THE ABRUPT SILENCE IS DEAFENING. THE ONLY SURVIVORS ARE BUCHER, A HANDFUL OF HIS MEN...
"...AND MY FATHER.
WE CAUGHT FU MANCHU HIDING BEHIND THE THE GARBAGE CANS, LEADER BUCHER...
WHERE DO YOU WANT HIM?
CAN'T YOU GET IT TO GO ANY FASTER, BLACK JACK?
SORRY, SIR DENIS--IT'S OPERATING AT FULL STEAM AS IS...
...BUT THE ENCAMPMENT CAN'T BE TOO MUCH FARTHER.


NOW, CHINAMAN, YOU'RE GOING TO DIE-- JUST AS YOUR STINKING COUNTRYMEN DIED--JUST AS EVERY FILTHY MEMBER OF YOUR INFERIOR RACE WILL DIE!!
"I WATCH FROM BEHIND THE BUILDING...
LOOK AT MY FACE, FU MANCHU --LOOK AT IT WHILE I TELL YOU WHAT HAPPENED TO IT!
ONE OF YOUR KIND DID THIS TO ME...
"PERHAPS MY FATHER DESERVES DEATH...
SURE, HE WAS JAPANESE, NOT CHINESE LIKE YOU...
BUT IT'S ALL THE SAME.
HE WAS SUPPOSED TO BE AN ALLY-- BUT HE RAN TO SAVE HIS OWN YELLOW SKIN, LEAVING ME TO DIE IN THAT BOMBED-OUT BUNKER...*
*SEE LAST ISSUE.--ROY.
BUT I DIDN'T DIE. I LIVED TO KILL YOU-- AND EVERY ONE LIKE YOU--!!
"YES, PERHAPS MY FATHER DESERVES TO DIE...
"...BUT NOT AT THE HANDS OF A MAN LIKE THIS.
FWOOM
"THE DEFLECTED WEAPON STRIKES THE SIDE OF THE BUILDING...
"...REVEALING WHAT I HAD EARLIER GLIMPSED.
"IT IS REPUGNANT.


HOLD IT RIGHT THERE, CHINK!
"IT WOULD SEEM I HAVE SAVED MY FATHER'S LIFE ONLY TO FORFEIT MY OWN.
"NO!
"BUT... WHO?!
THAT WAS A PRETTY NERVY STUNT, CHI.
YES, LAD. HOW DID YOU KNOW WE HAD ARRIVED?
"BLACK JACK TARR... AND SIR DENIS NAYLAND SMITH.
I... DID NOT KNOW... YOU HAD--
AGHK-K!!
CHOOK
YOU SEE?!? I'LL WIN AFTER ALL! NO INFERIOR SCUM CAN DEFEAT ME!!
WILHELM BUCHER IS BETTER THAN YOU!!
I CAN KILL YOU ALL --ALL OF YOU!!


"HE IS MAD.
I'LL KILL US ALL!!
"AND HE CARRIES HIS MADNESS INTO THE BARRACKS BUILDING WHICH HOUSES NOTHING BUT DEATH...
THE FOURTH REICH IS SUPREME--!
"A MISSILE... ARMED WITH THE NUCLEAR WARHEAD SIR DENIS SPOKE OF...
THE FOURTH REICH WILL KILL US ALL!!
WHAT? IT DIDN'T WORK-- IT DIDN'T DETONATE! BUT NAZI TECHNOLOGY IS FAULTLESS--!
WHY DIDN'T IT DETONATE?
I... DEACTIVATED IT.
YOU--?!! BUT IT CAN'T BE--!!
YOU'RE INFERIOR! YOU SHOULD BE DEAD!!
NO MAN CAN LIVE WITH A KNIFE IN HIS CHEST--!
"HE BACKS AWAY FROM ME...
"...FALLS...
"...AND SLIDES DOWN THE MISSILE.
AAAIIIIEEEEEEEEEE
THUD!
"IT IS ROOTED DEEPLY IN THE GROUND.
CHI-- ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?
BUCHER IS DEAD...
...AND MY FATHER HAS ESCAPED, AS I KNEW HE WOULD ...EVEN AS I SAVED HIS LIFE.
PERHAPS FU MANCHU'S CONDUCT HAS EARNED HIM DEATH, BUT HE DOES NOT DESERVE TO DIE MERELY BECAUSE HE WAS BORN TO HIS RACE.
THUS, IT WAS MY ACTIONS WHICH SET HIM FREE.
DON'T FEEL BADLY ABOUT IT, LAD. AT LEAST WE'VE KEPT THE WARHEAD OUT OF HIS HANDS...
...AND I SUPPOSE THAT'S THE MOST WE COULD HAVE EXPECTED.
NEXT: RITES OF COURAGE, FISTS OF DEATH!


MASTER OF KUNG FU
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THE HANDS OF SHANG-CHI,
MASTER OF KUNG FU
™
™
WILSON/SINNOTT
A MARTIAL-ARTS MASTERPIECE!
FISTS OF FURY-- RITES OF DEATH!

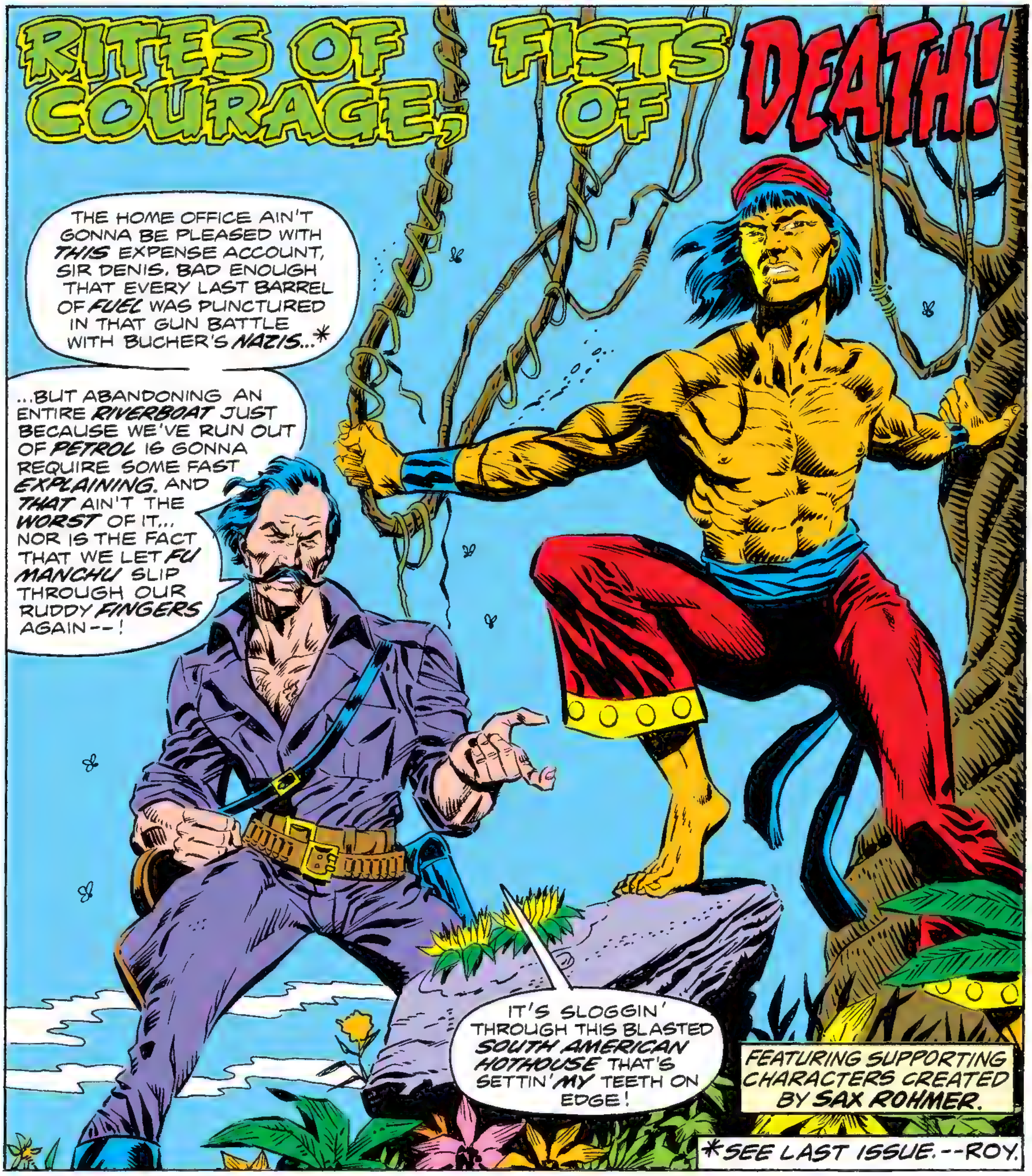
"Call me Shang-Chi, as my *father* did, when he raised me and molded my mind and my body in the vacuum of his Honan, China, retreat. I learned many things from my father: That my name means "The Rising and Advancing of a Spirit," that my body could be forged into a living weapon through the discipline of kung fu, and that it might be used for the murder of a man called Dr. Petrie.

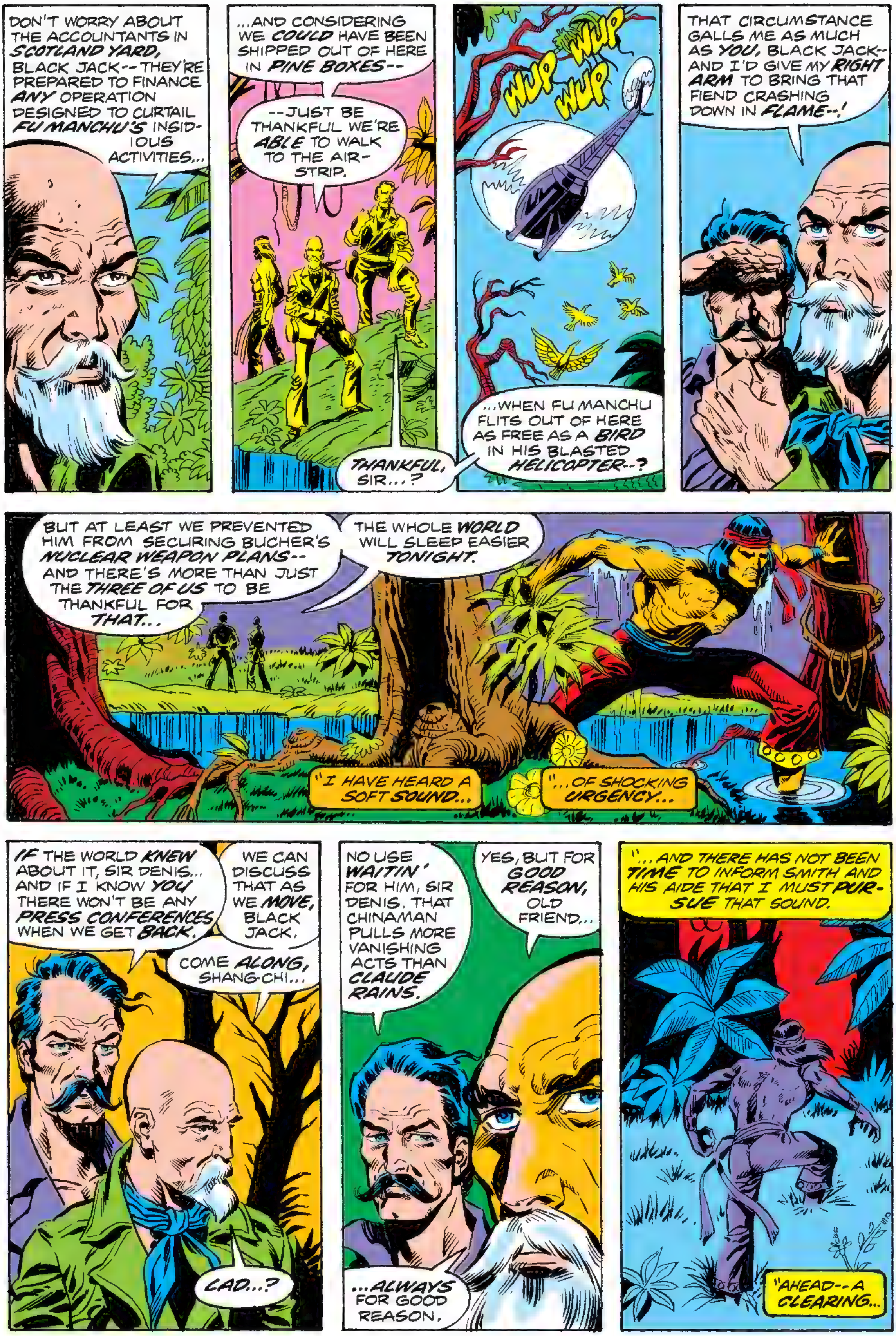
"Since then, I have learned that my father is **Dr. Fu Manchu**, the most insidiously evil man on earth... and that to *honor* him would bring nothing but *dishonor* to the spirit of my *name*."

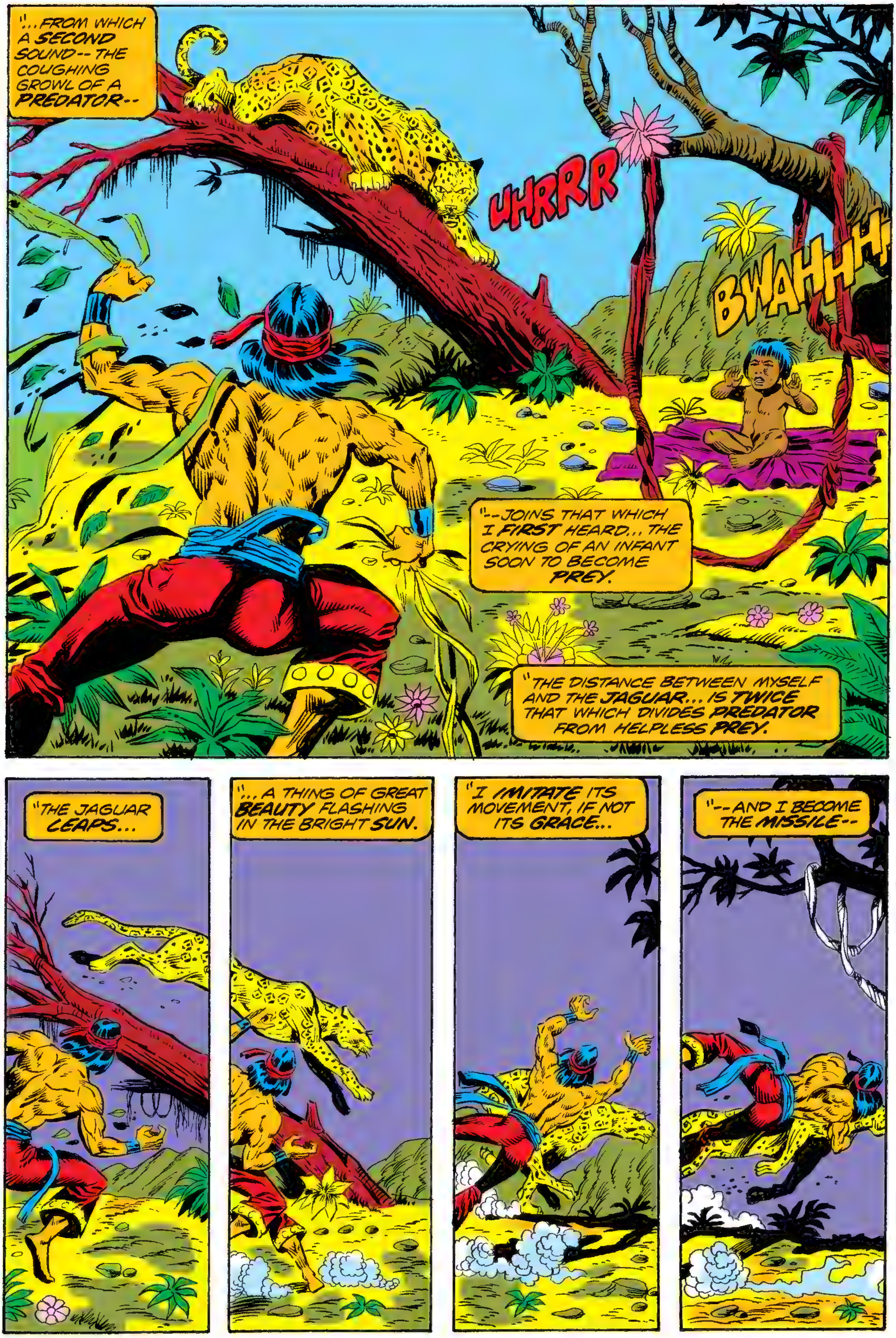
Stan Lee PRESENTS: MASTER OF KUNG FU!™

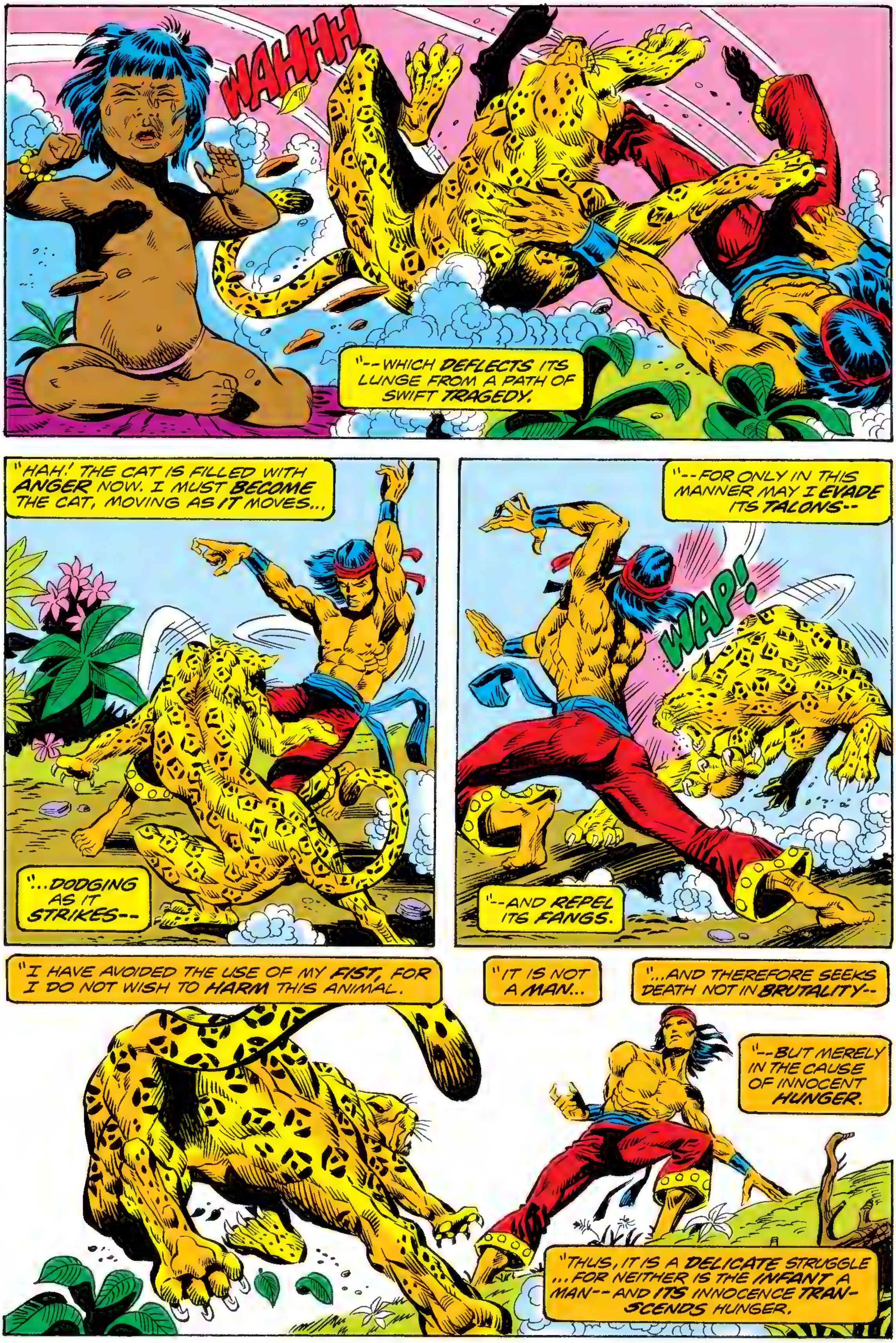
DOUG MOENCH THOUGHT / PAUL GULACY VISION / SAL TRAPANI STRENGTH / JON COSTANZA, letters BILL MANTLO, colors / ROY THOMAS GUIDANCE

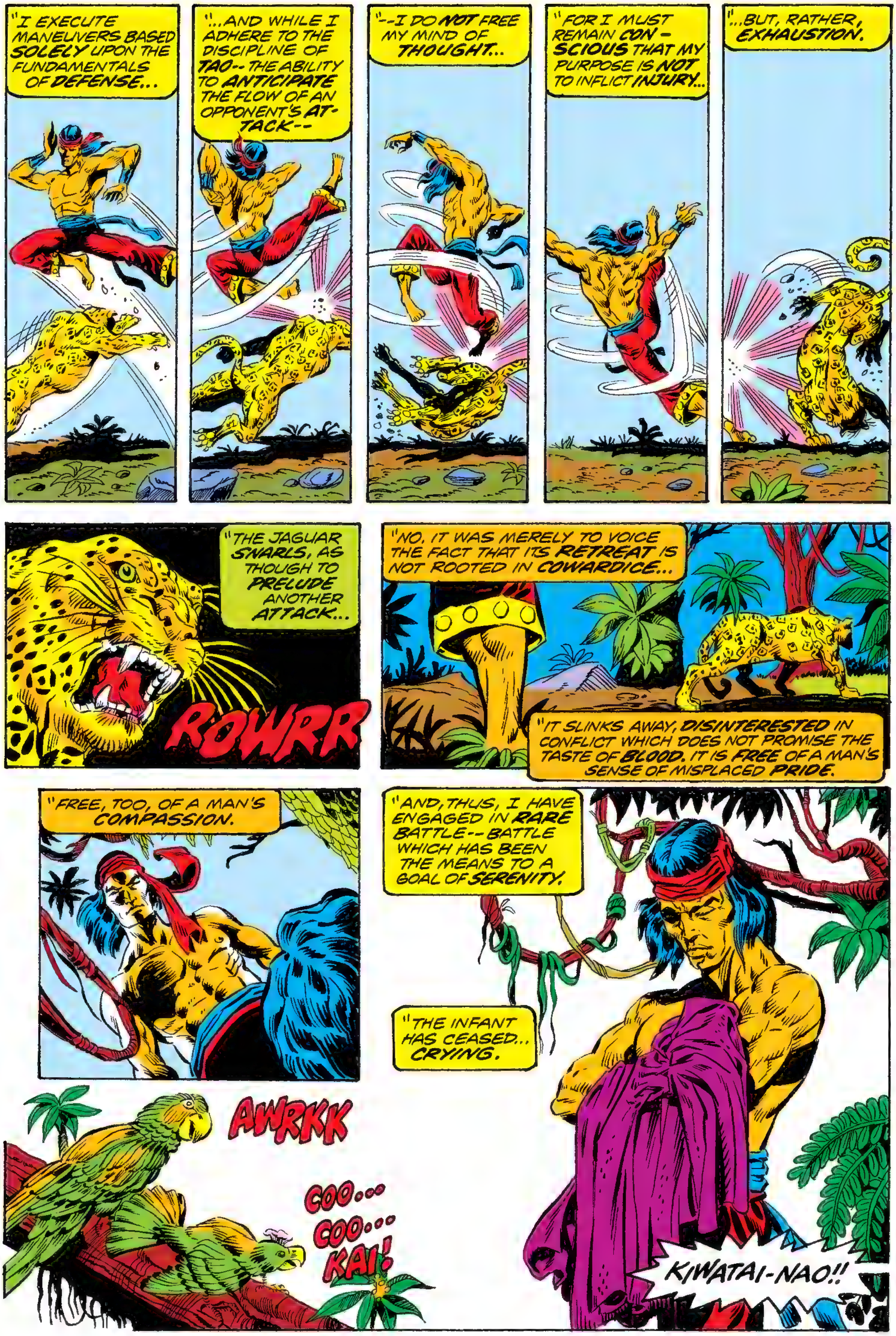
RITES OF COURAGE, FISTS OF DEATH!

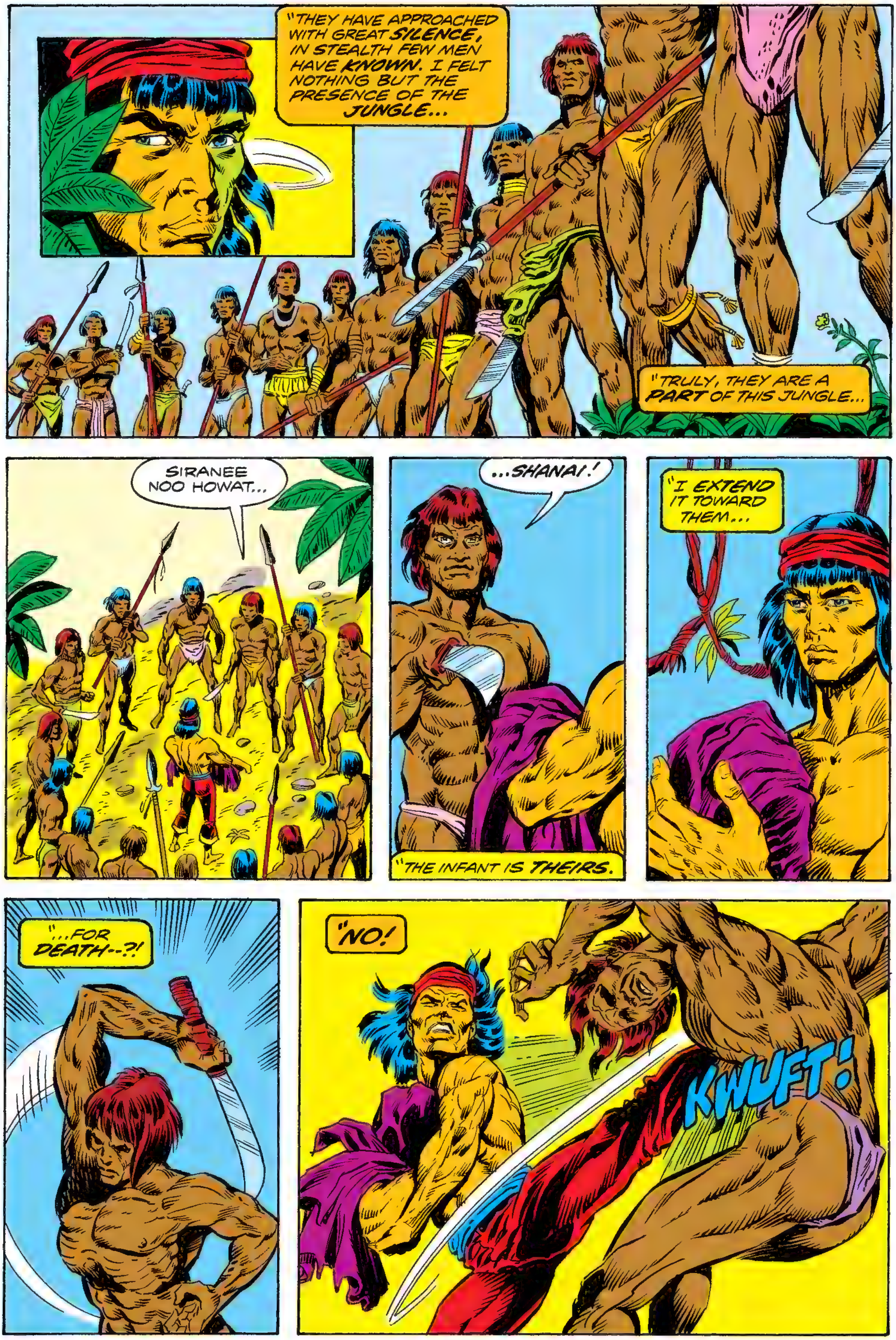

THE HOME OFFICE AIN'T GONNA BE PLEASED WITH *THIS* EXPENSE ACCOUNT, SIR DENIS. BAD ENOUGH THAT EVERY LAST BARREL OF *FUEL* WAS PUNCTURED IN THAT GUN BATTLE WITH BUCHER'S *NAZIS*...*
...BUT ABANDONING AN ENTIRE *RIVERBOAT* JUST BECAUSE WE'VE RUN OUT OF *PETROL* IS GONNA REQUIRE SOME FAST *EXPLAINING*. AND *THAT* AIN'T THE *WORST* OF IT... NOR IS THE FACT THAT WE LET *FU MANCHU* SLIP THROUGH OUR RUDDY *FINGERS* AGAIN--!
IT'S SLOGGIN' THROUGH THIS BLASTED *SOUTH AMERICAN HOTHOUSE* THAT'S SETTIN' *MY* TEETH ON EDGE!
FEATURING SUPPORTING CHARACTERS CREATED BY *SAX ROHMER*.
*SEE LAST ISSUE. --ROY.

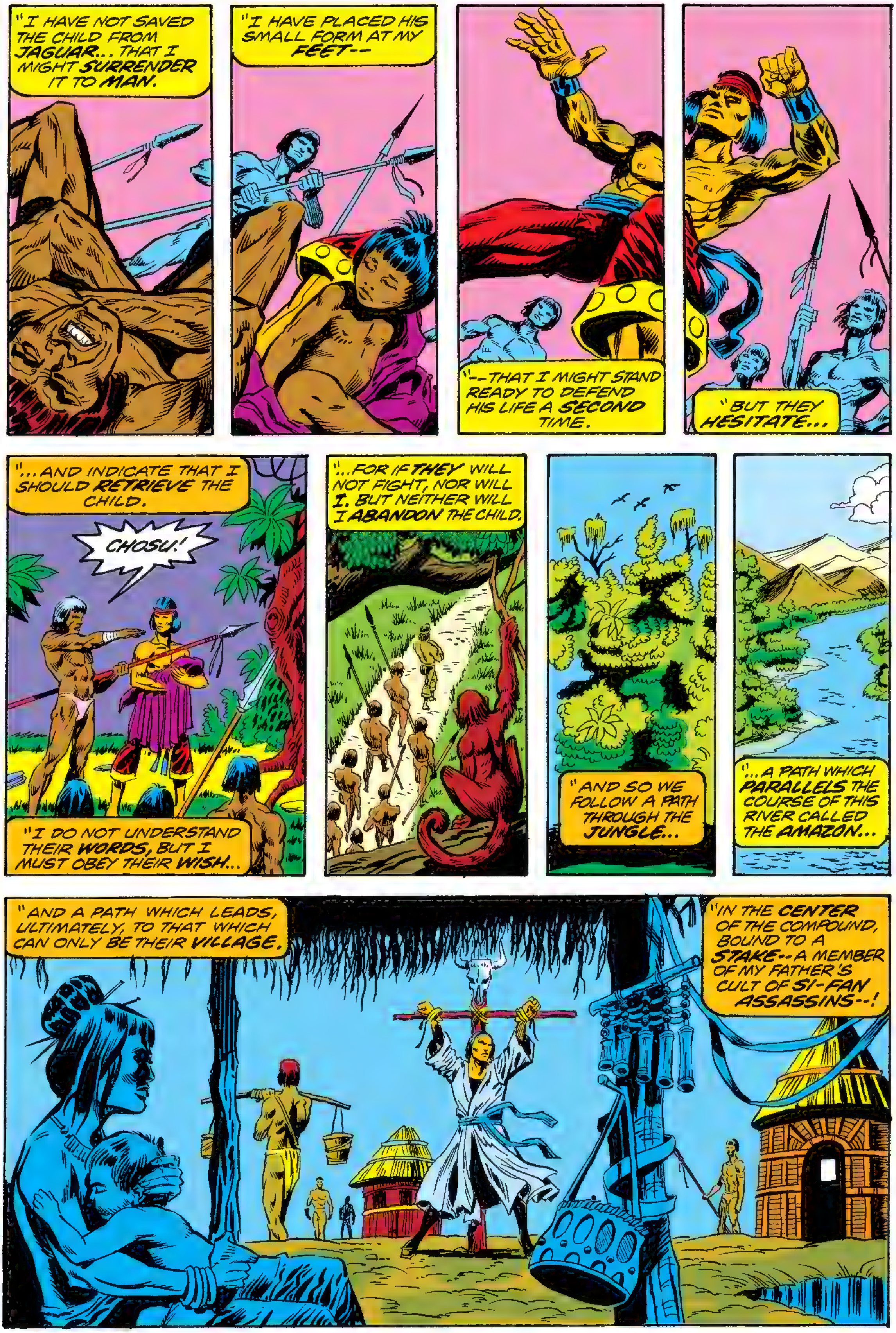

DON'T WORRY ABOUT THE ACCOUNTANTS IN SCOTLAND YARD, BLACK JACK--THEY'RE PREPARED TO FINANCE ANY OPERATION DESIGNED TO CURTAIL FU MANCHU'S INSIDIOUS ACTIVITIES...
...AND CONSIDERING WE COULD HAVE BEEN SHIPPED OUT OF HERE IN PINE BOXES--
--JUST BE THANKFUL WE'RE ABLE TO WALK TO THE AIR-STRIP.
THANKFUL, SIR...?
WUP WUP WUP
...WHEN FU MANCHU FLITS OUT OF HERE AS FREE AS A BIRD IN HIS BLASTED HELICOPTER--?
THAT CIRCUMSTANCE GALLS ME AS MUCH AS YOU, BLACK JACK--AND I'D GIVE MY RIGHT ARM TO BRING THAT FIEND CRASHING DOWN IN FLAME--!
BUT AT LEAST WE PREVENTED HIM FROM SECURING BUCHER'S NUCLEAR WEAPON PLANS--AND THERE'S MORE THAN JUST THE THREE OF US TO BE THANKFUL FOR THAT...
THE WHOLE WORLD WILL SLEEP EASIER TONIGHT.
"I HAVE HEARD A SOFT SOUND...
...OF SHOCKING URGENCY...
IF THE WORLD KNEW ABOUT IT, SIR DENIS... AND IF I KNOW YOU THERE WON'T BE ANY PRESS CONFERENCES WHEN WE GET BACK.
WE CAN DISCUSS THAT AS WE MOVE, BLACK JACK.
COME ALONG, SHANG-CHI...
CAD...?
NO USE WAITIN' FOR HIM, SIR DENIS. THAT CHINAMAN PULLS MORE VANISHING ACTS THAN CLAUDE RAINS.
YES, BUT FOR GOOD REASON, OLD FRIEND...
...ALWAYS FOR GOOD REASON.
"...AND THERE HAS NOT BEEN TIME TO INFORM SMITH AND HIS AIDE THAT I MUST PURSUE THAT SOUND.
"AHEAD--A CLEARING...

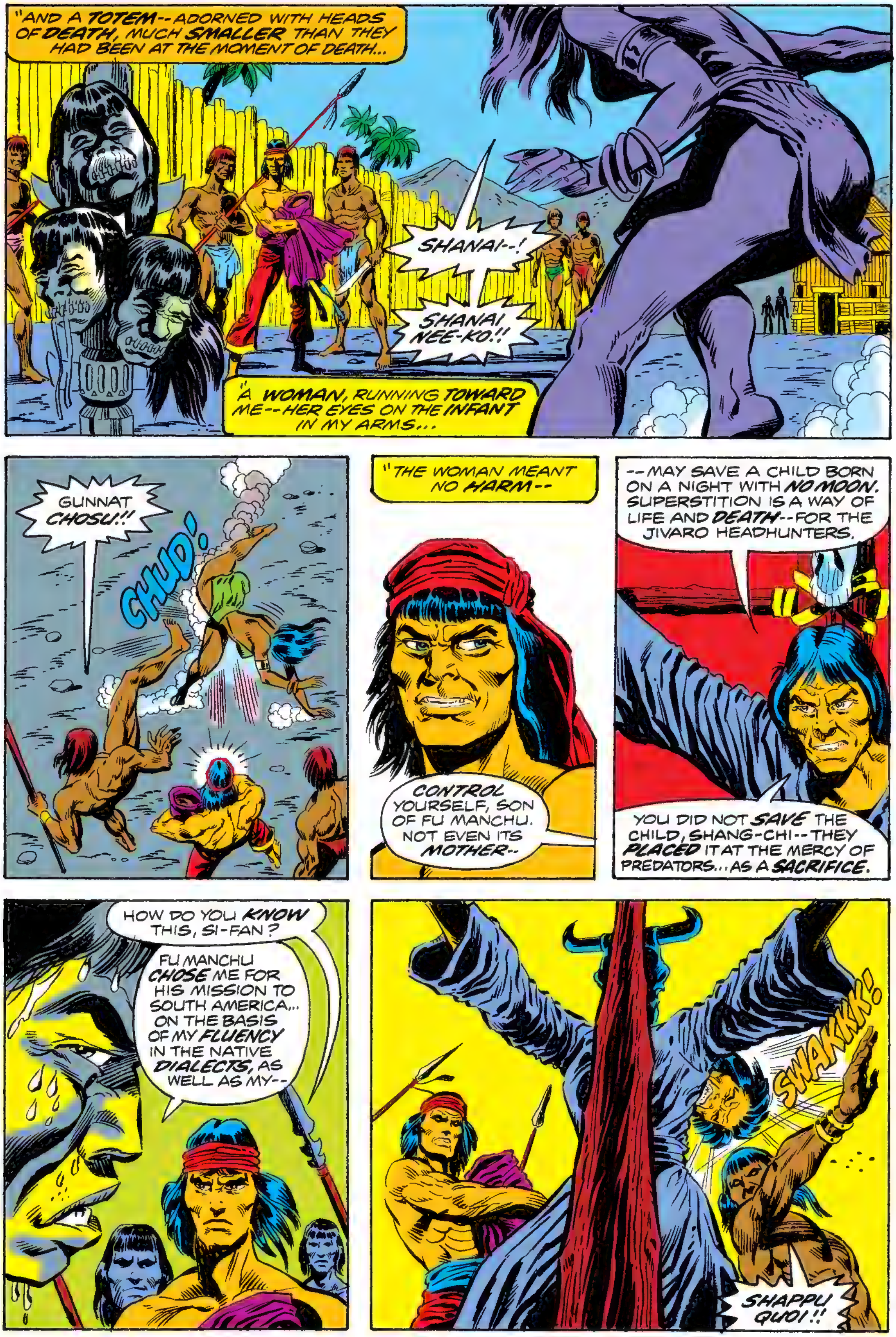

"...FROM WHICH A SECOND SOUND-- THE COUGHING GROWL OF A PREDATOR--
UHRRR
BWAHHH
"--JOINS THAT WHICH I FIRST HEARD... THE CRYING OF AN INFANT SOON TO BECOME PREY.
"THE DISTANCE BETWEEN MYSELF AND THE JAGUAR... IS TWICE THAT WHICH DIVIDES PREDATOR FROM HELPLESS PREY.
"THE JAGUAR LEAPS...
"...A THING OF GREAT BEAUTY FLASHING IN THE BRIGHT SUN.
"I IMITATE ITS MOVEMENT, IF NOT ITS GRACE...
"--AND I BECOME THE MISSILE--

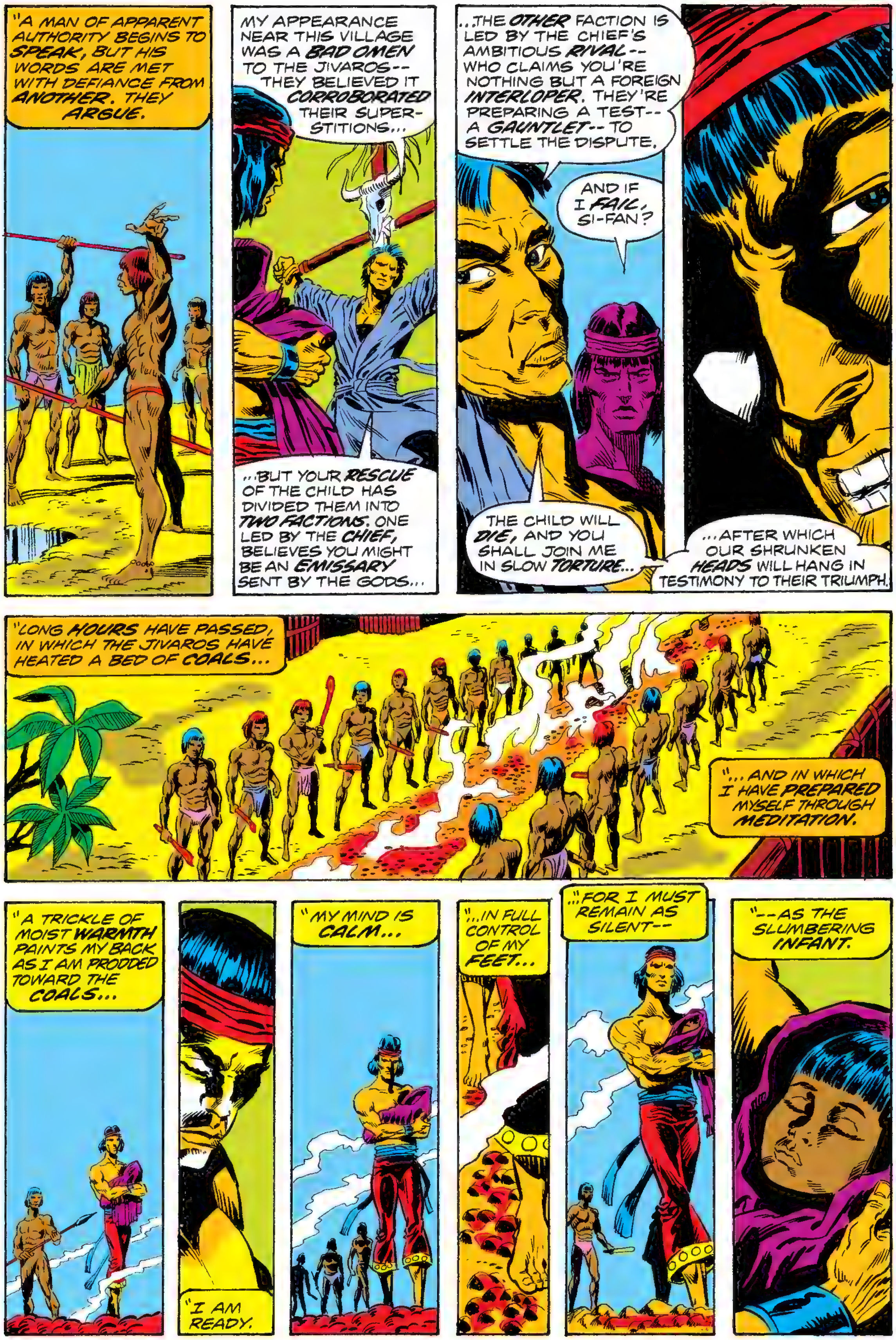

WAHHH
"--WHICH DEFLECTS ITS LUNGE FROM A PATH OF SWIFT TRAGEDY.
"HAH! THE CAT IS FILLED WITH ANGER NOW. I MUST BECOME THE CAT, MOVING AS IT MOVES...
"...DODGING AS IT STRIKES--
"--FOR ONLY IN THIS MANNER MAY I EVADE ITS TALONS--
WAP!
"--AND REPEL ITS FANGS.
"I HAVE AVOIDED THE USE OF MY FIST, FOR I DO NOT WISH TO HARM THIS ANIMAL.
"IT IS NOT A MAN...
"...AND THEREFORE SEEKS DEATH NOT IN BRUTALITY--
"--BUT MERELY IN THE CAUSE OF INNOCENT HUNGER.
"THUS, IT IS A DELICATE STRUGGLE ...FOR NEITHER IS THE INFANT A MAN-- AND ITS INNOCENCE TRANSCENDS HUNGER.

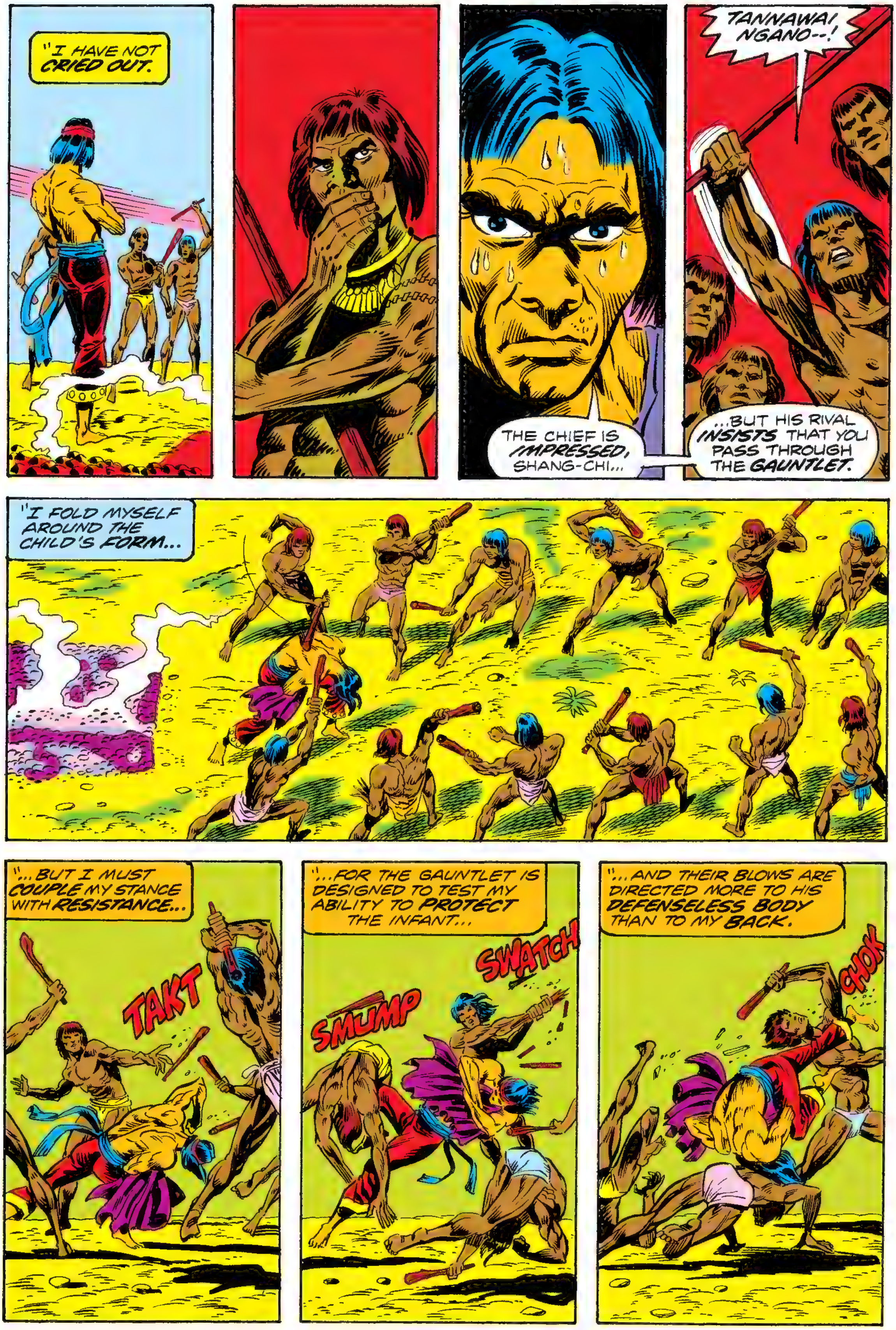

"I EXECUTE MANEUVERS BASED SOLELY UPON THE FUNDAMENTALS OF DEFENSE...
"...AND WHILE I ADHERE TO THE DISCIPLINE OF TAO-- THE ABILITY TO ANTICIPATE THE FLOW OF AN OPPONENT'S ATTACK--
"--I DO NOT FREE MY MIND OF THOUGHT...
"FOR I MUST REMAIN CONSCIOUS THAT MY PURPOSE IS NOT TO INFLICT INJURY...
"...BUT, RATHER, EXHAUSTION.
"THE JAGUAR SNARLS, AS THOUGH TO PRELUDE ANOTHER ATTACK...
ROWRR
"NO. IT WAS MERELY TO VOICE THE FACT THAT ITS RETREAT IS NOT ROOTED IN COWARDICE...
"IT SLINKS AWAY, DISINTERESTED IN CONFLICT WHICH DOES NOT PROMISE THE TASTE OF BLOOD. IT IS FREE OF A MAN'S SENSE OF MISPLACED PRIDE.
"FREE, TOO, OF A MAN'S COMPASSION.
"AND, THUS, I HAVE ENGAGED IN RARE BATTLE-- BATTLE WHICH HAS BEEN THE MEANS TO A GOAL OF SERENITY.
"THE INFANT HAS CEASED... CRYING.
AWRKK
COO... COO... KAI!
KIWATAI-NAO!!

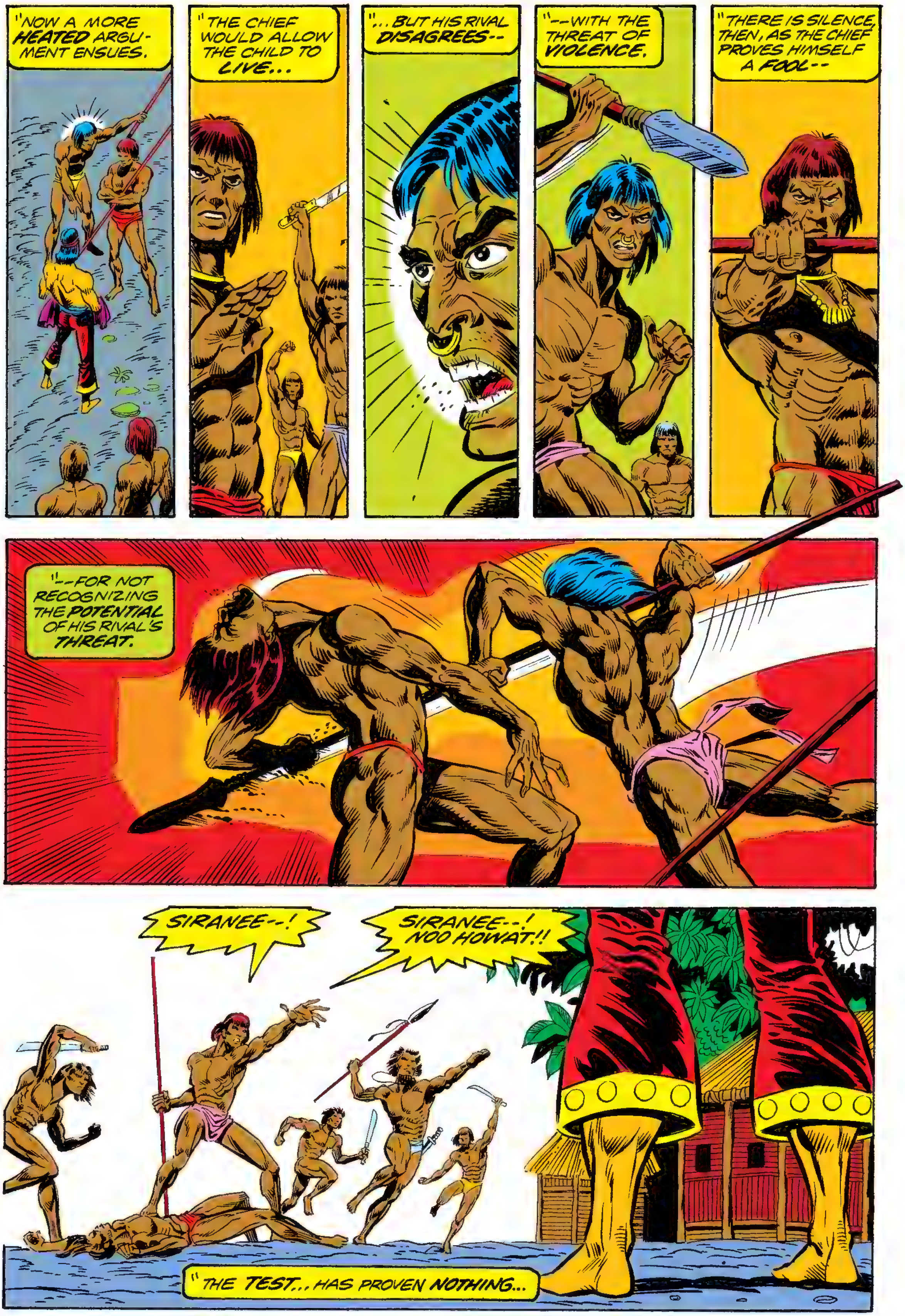

"THEY HAVE APPROACHED WITH GREAT SILENCE, IN STEALTH FEW MEN HAVE KNOWN. I FELT NOTHING BUT THE PRESENCE OF THE JUNGLE...
"TRULY, THEY ARE A PART OF THIS JUNGLE...
SIRANEE NOO HOWAT...
...SHANAI!
"THE INFANT IS THEIRS.
"I EXTEND IT TOWARD THEM...
"...FOR DEATH--?!
"NO!
KWUFT!

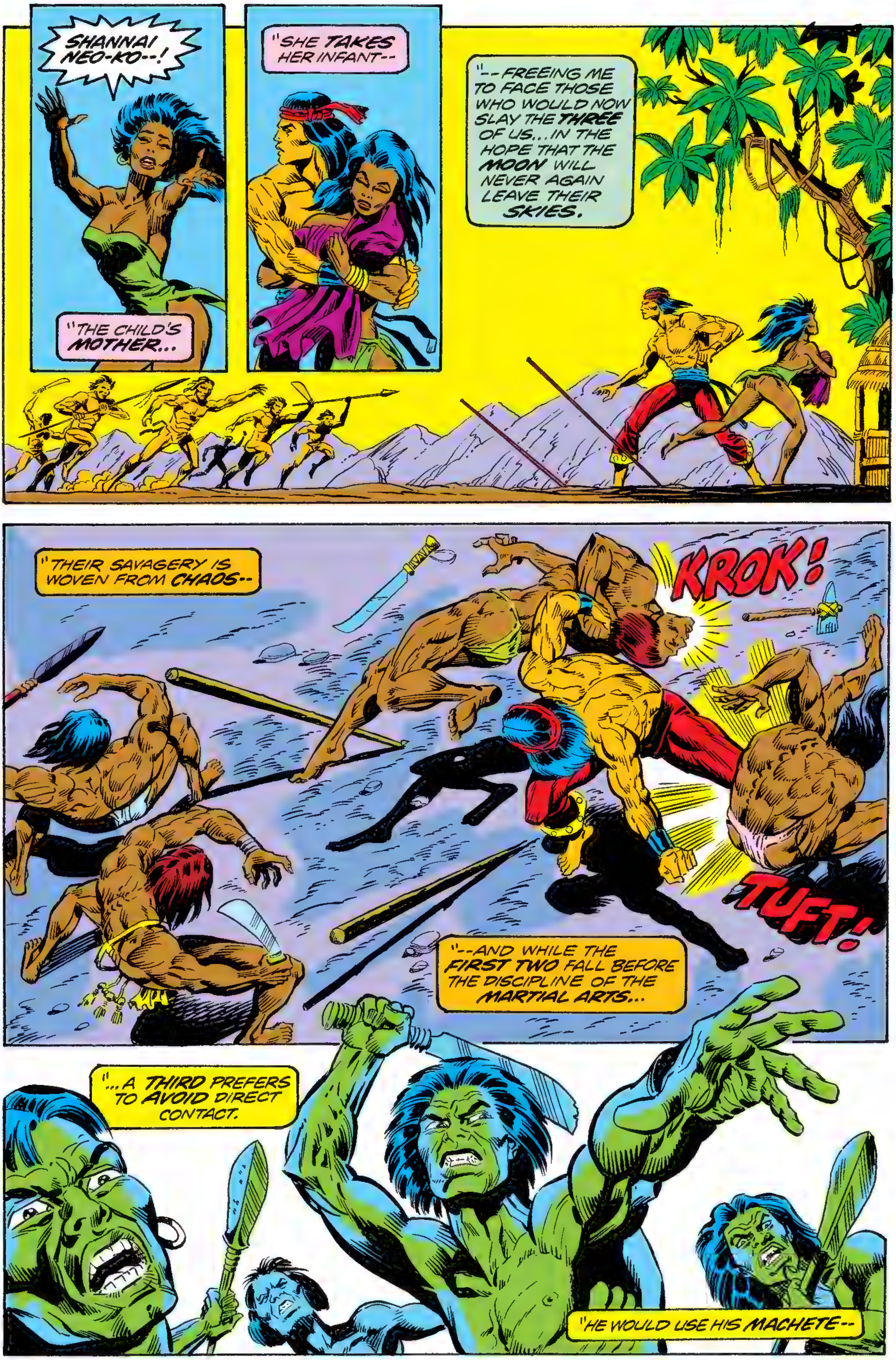

"I HAVE NOT SAVED THE CHILD FROM JAGUAR... THAT I MIGHT SURRENDER IT TO MAN.
"I HAVE PLACED HIS SMALL FORM AT MY FEET--
"--THAT I MIGHT STAND READY TO DEFEND HIS LIFE A SECOND TIME.
"BUT THEY HESITATE...
"...AND INDICATE THAT I SHOULD RETRIEVE THE CHILD.
CHOSU!
"I DO NOT UNDERSTAND THEIR WORDS, BUT I MUST OBEY THEIR WISH...
"...FOR IF THEY WILL NOT FIGHT, NOR WILL I. BUT NEITHER WILL I ABANDON THE CHILD.
"AND SO WE FOLLOW A PATH THROUGH THE JUNGLE...
"...A PATH WHICH PARALLELS THE COURSE OF THIS RIVER CALLED THE AMAZON...
"AND A PATH WHICH LEADS, ULTIMATELY, TO THAT WHICH CAN ONLY BE THEIR VILLAGE.
"IN THE CENTER OF THE COMPOUND, BOUND TO A STAKE--A MEMBER OF MY FATHER'S CULT OF SI-FAN ASSASSINS--!

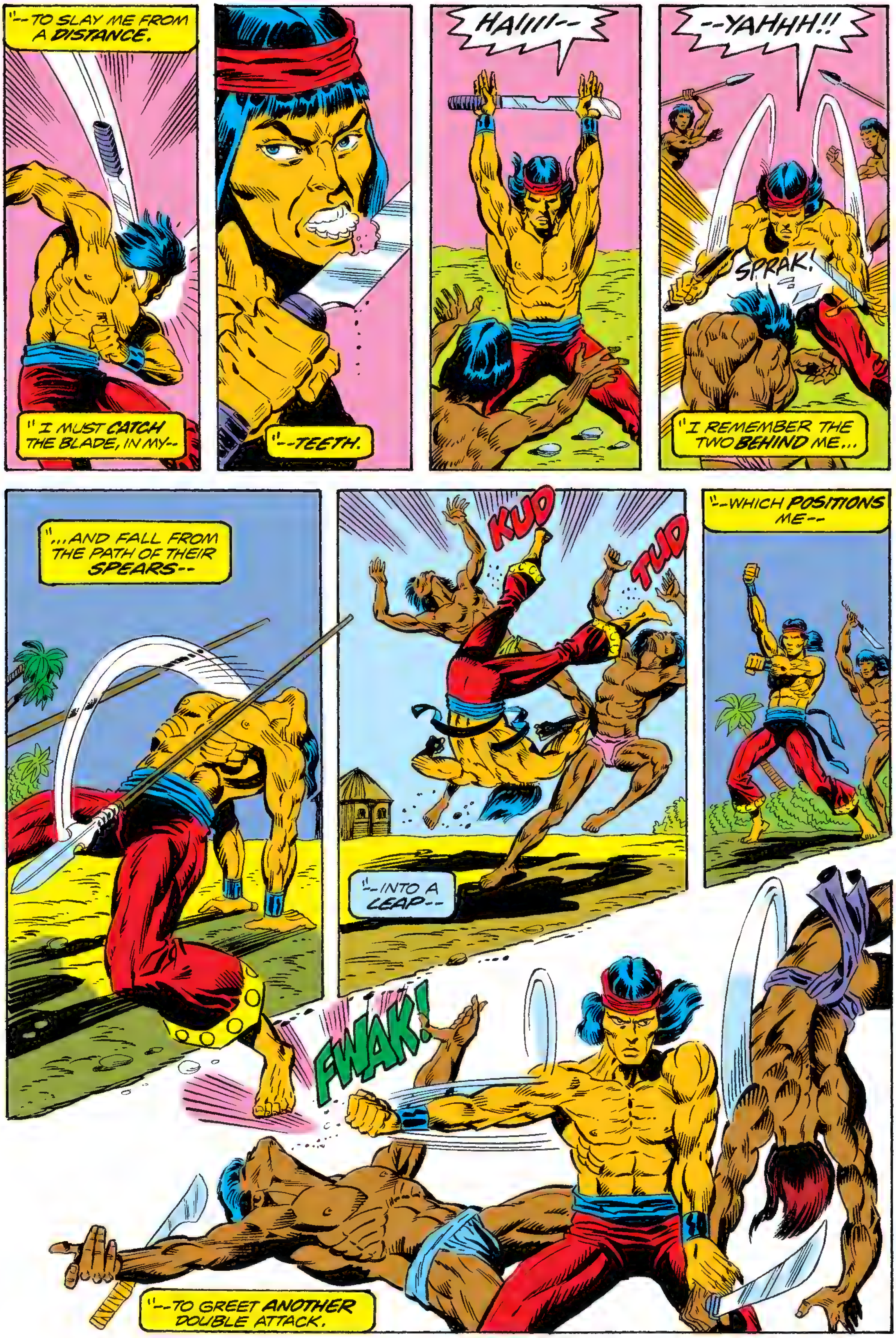

"AND A TOTEM--ADORNED WITH HEADS OF DEATH, MUCH SMALLER THAN THEY HAD BEEN AT THE MOMENT OF DEATH...
SHANAI--!
SHANAI NEE-KO!!
"A WOMAN, RUNNING TOWARD ME--HER EYES ON THE INFANT IN MY ARMS...
GUNNAT CHOSU!!
CHUD!
"THE WOMAN MEANT NO HARM--
CONTROL YOURSELF, SON OF FU MANCHU. NOT EVEN ITS MOTHER--
--MAY SAVE A CHILD BORN ON A NIGHT WITH NO MOON. SUPERSTITION IS A WAY OF LIFE AND DEATH--FOR THE JIVARO HEADHUNTERS.
YOU DID NOT SAVE THE CHILD, SHANG-CHI--THEY PLACED IT AT THE MERCY OF PREDATORS...AS A SACRIFICE.
HOW DO YOU KNOW THIS, SI-FAN?
FU MANCHU CHOSE ME FOR HIS MISSION TO SOUTH AMERICA... ON THE BASIS OF MY FLUENCY IN THE NATIVE DIALECTS, AS WELL AS MY--
SWAKKK!
SHAPPU QUOI!!

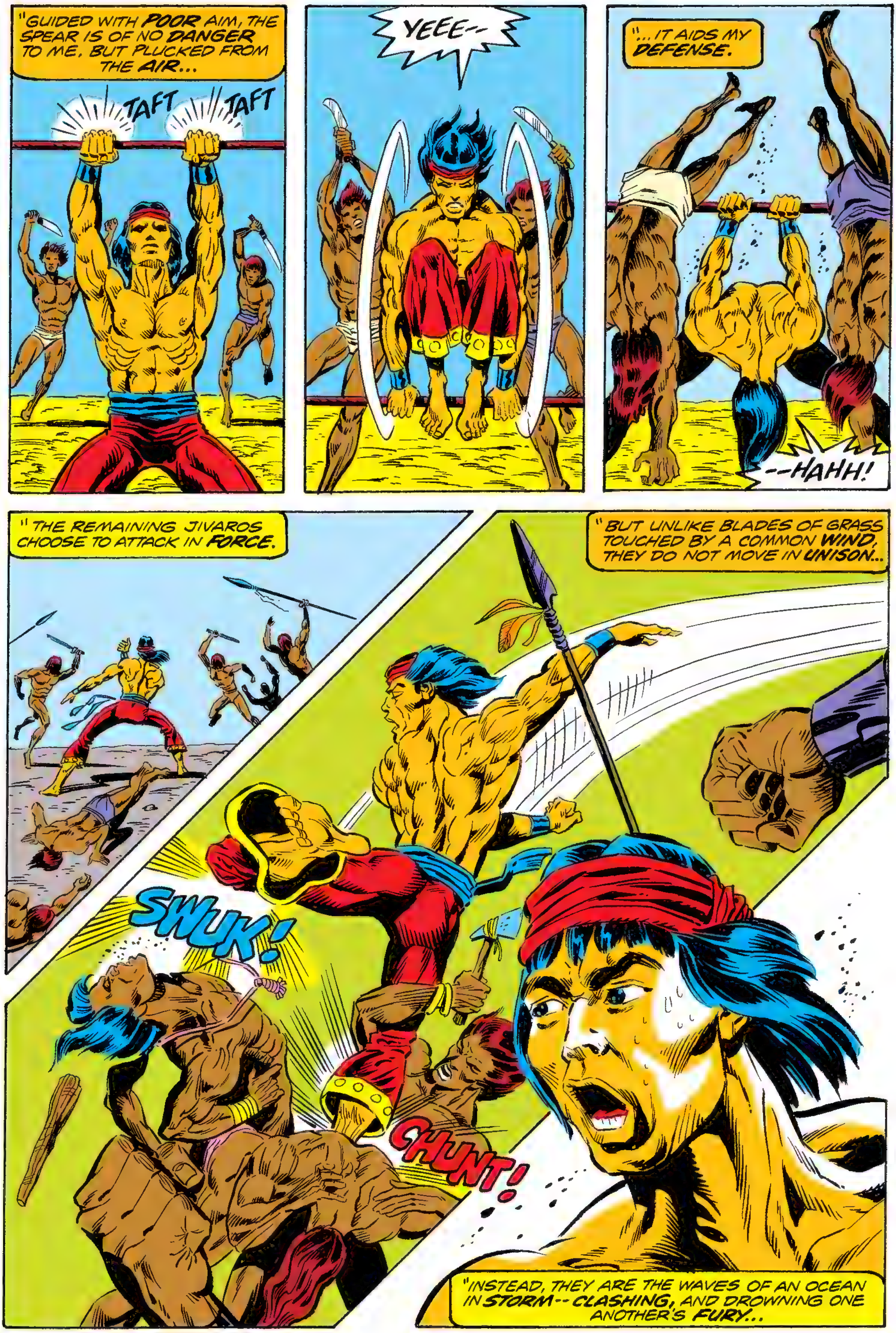

"A MAN OF APPARENT AUTHORITY BEGINS TO SPEAK, BUT HIS WORDS ARE MET WITH DEFIANCE FROM ANOTHER. THEY ARGUE.
MY APPEARANCE NEAR THIS VILLAGE WAS A BAD OMEN TO THE JIVAROS-- THEY BELIEVED IT CORROBORATED THEIR SUPERSTITIONS...
...BUT YOUR RESCUE OF THE CHILD HAS DIVIDED THEM INTO TWO FACTIONS. ONE LED BY THE CHIEF, BELIEVES YOU MIGHT BE AN EMISSARY SENT BY THE GODS...
...THE OTHER FACTION IS LED BY THE CHIEF'S AMBITIOUS RIVAL-- WHO CLAIMS YOU'RE NOTHING BUT A FOREIGN INTERLOPER. THEY'RE PREPARING A TEST-- A GAUNTLET-- TO SETTLE THE DISPUTE.
AND IF I FAIL, SI-FAN?
THE CHILD WILL DIE, AND YOU SHALL JOIN ME IN SLOW TORTURE...
...AFTER WHICH OUR SHRUNKEN HEADS WILL HANG IN TESTIMONY TO THEIR TRIUMPH.
"LONG HOURS HAVE PASSED, IN WHICH THE JIVAROS HAVE HEATED A BED OF COALS...
"...AND IN WHICH I HAVE PREPARED MYSELF THROUGH MEDITATION.
"A TRICKLE OF MOIST WARMTH PAINTS MY BACK AS I AM PRODDED TOWARD THE COALS...
"I AM READY.
"MY MIND IS CALM...
"...IN FULL CONTROL OF MY FEET...
"...FOR I MUST REMAIN AS SILENT--
"--AS THE SLUMBERING INFANT.

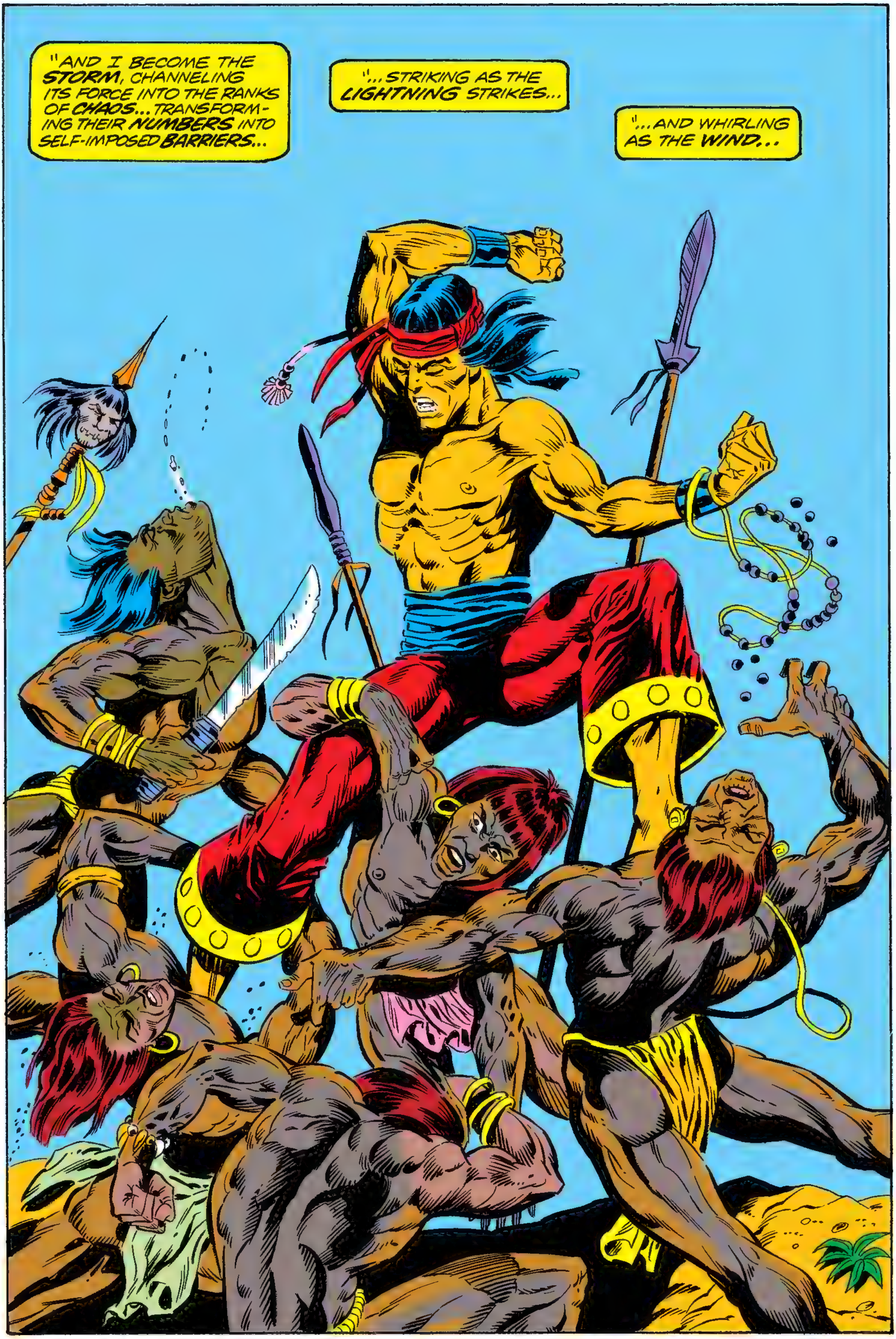

"I HAVE NOT CRIED OUT.
TANNAWAI NGANO--!
THE CHIEF IS IMPRESSED, SHANG-CHI...
...BUT HIS RIVAL INSISTS THAT YOU PASS THROUGH THE GAUNTLET.
"I FOLD MYSELF AROUND THE CHILD'S FORM...
"...BUT I MUST COUPLE MY STANCE WITH RESISTANCE...
TAKT
"...FOR THE GAUNTLET IS DESIGNED TO TEST MY ABILITY TO PROTECT THE INFANT...
SWATCH
SMUMP
"...AND THEIR BLOWS ARE DIRECTED MORE TO HIS DEFENSELESS BODY THAN TO MY BACK.
CHOK

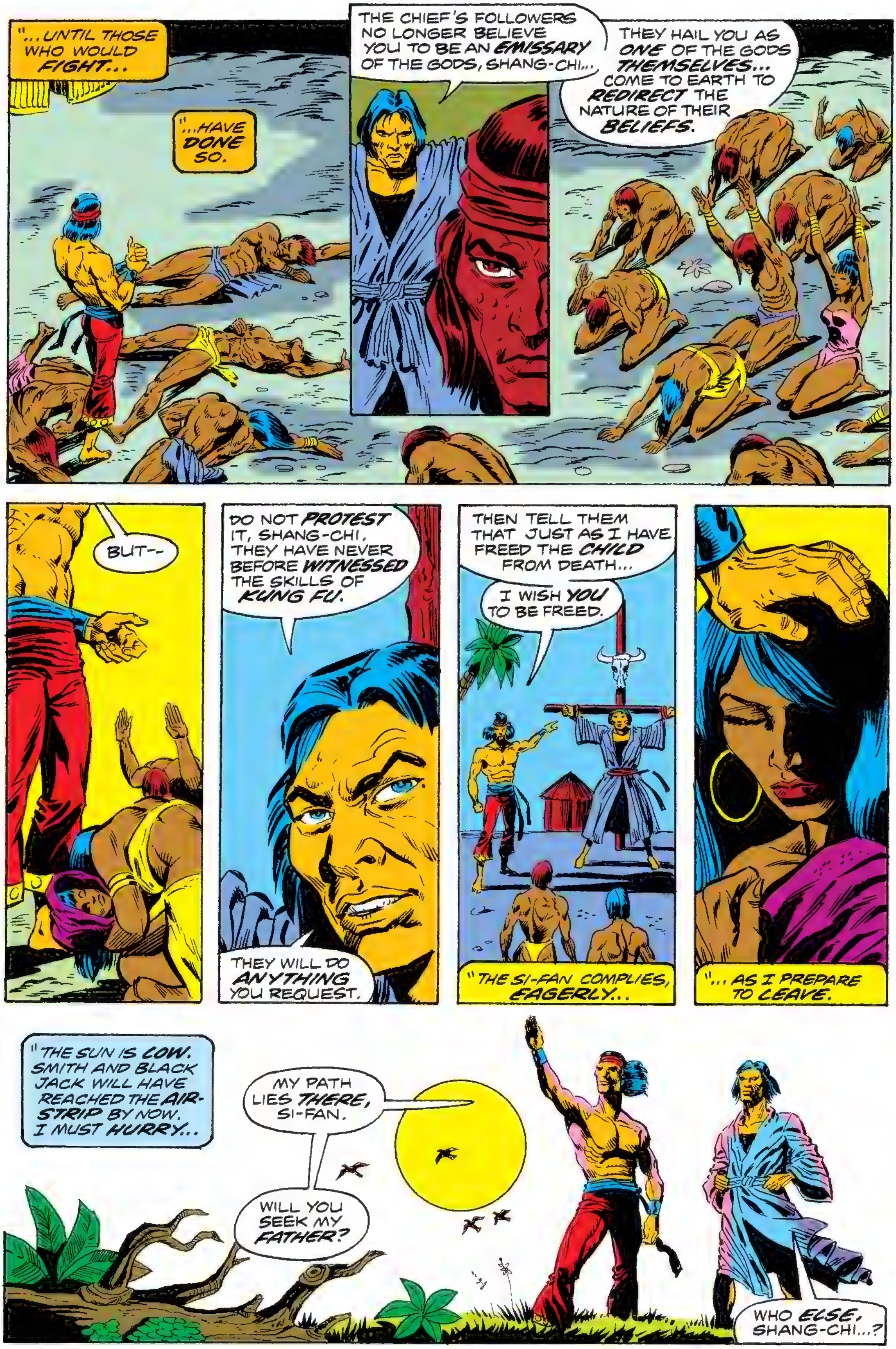

"NOW A MORE **HEATED** ARGUMENT ENSUES.
"THE CHIEF WOULD ALLOW THE CHILD TO **LIVE**...
"...BUT HIS RIVAL **DISAGREES**--
"--WITH THE THREAT OF **VIOLENCE**.
"THERE IS SILENCE, THEN, AS THE CHIEF PROVES HIMSELF A **FOOL**--
"--FOR NOT RECOGNIZING THE **POTENTIAL** OF HIS RIVAL'S **THREAT**.
SIRANEE--!
SIRANEE--! NOO HOWAT!!
"THE **TEST**... HAS PROVEN **NOTHING**...

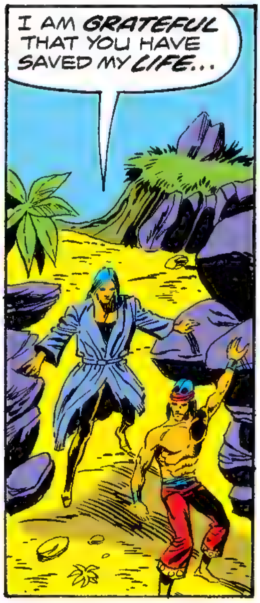

SHANNAI NEO-KO--!
"THE CHILD'S MOTHER...
"SHE TAKES HER INFANT--
"--FREEING ME TO FACE THOSE WHO WOULD NOW SLAY THE THREE OF US...IN THE HOPE THAT THE MOON WILL NEVER AGAIN LEAVE THEIR SKIES.
"THEIR SAVAGERY IS WOVEN FROM CHAOS--
KROK!
TUFT!
"--AND WHILE THE FIRST TWO FALL BEFORE THE DISCIPLINE OF THE MARTIAL ARTS...
"...A THIRD PREFERS TO AVOID DIRECT CONTACT.
"HE WOULD USE HIS MACHETE--


"--TO SLAY ME FROM A DISTANCE.
"I MUST CATCH THE BLADE, IN MY--
"--TEETH.
HAIIII--
--YAHHH!!
SPRAK!
"I REMEMBER THE TWO BEHIND ME...
"...AND FALL FROM THE PATH OF THEIR SPEARS--
KUD
TUD
"--INTO A LEAP--
"--WHICH POSITIONS ME--
FWAK!
"--TO GREET ANOTHER DOUBLE ATTACK.

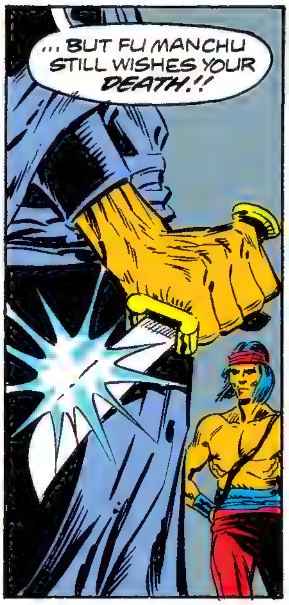

"GUIDED WITH POOR AIM, THE SPEAR IS OF NO DANGER TO ME. BUT PLUCKED FROM THE AIR...
TAFT
TAFT
YEEE--
"...IT AIDS MY DEFENSE.
--HAHH!
"THE REMAINING JIVAROS CHOOSE TO ATTACK IN FORCE.
"BUT UNLIKE BLADES OF GRASS TOUCHED BY A COMMON WIND, THEY DO NOT MOVE IN UNISON...
SWUK!
CHUNT!
"INSTEAD, THEY ARE THE WAVES OF AN OCEAN IN STORM--CLASHING, AND DROWNING ONE ANOTHER'S FURY...


"AND I BECOME THE STORM, CHANNELING ITS FORCE INTO THE RANKS OF CHAOS... TRANSFORMING THEIR NUMBERS INTO SELF-IMPOSED BARRIERS...
"...STRIKING AS THE LIGHTNING STRIKES...
"...AND WHIRLING AS THE WIND...

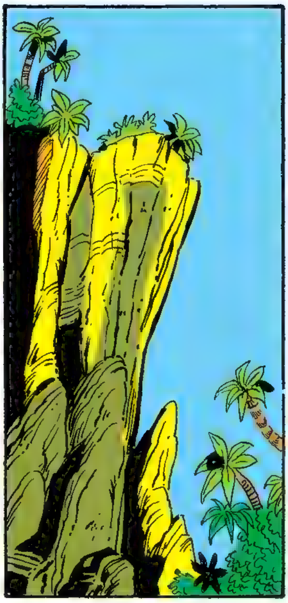

"...UNTIL THOSE WHO WOULD FIGHT...
"...HAVE DONE SO.
THE CHIEF'S FOLLOWERS NO LONGER BELIEVE YOU TO BE AN EMISSARY OF THE GODS, SHANG-CHI...
THEY HAIL YOU AS ONE OF THE GODS THEMSELVES... COME TO EARTH TO REDIRECT THE NATURE OF THEIR BELIEFS.
BUT--
DO NOT PROTEST IT, SHANG-CHI. THEY HAVE NEVER BEFORE WITNESSED THE SKILLS OF KUNG FU.
THEY WILL DO ANYTHING YOU REQUEST.
THEN TELL THEM THAT JUST AS I HAVE FREED THE CHILD FROM DEATH...
I WISH YOU TO BE FREED.
"THE SI-FAN COMPLIES, EAGERLY...
"... AS I PREPARE TO LEAVE.
"THE SUN IS LOW. SMITH AND BLACK JACK WILL HAVE REACHED THE AIR-STRIP BY NOW. I MUST HURRY...
MY PATH LIES THERE, SI-FAN.
WILL YOU SEEK MY FATHER?
WHO ELSE, SHANG-CHI...?


I AM **GRATEFUL** THAT YOU HAVE SAVED MY **LIFE**...

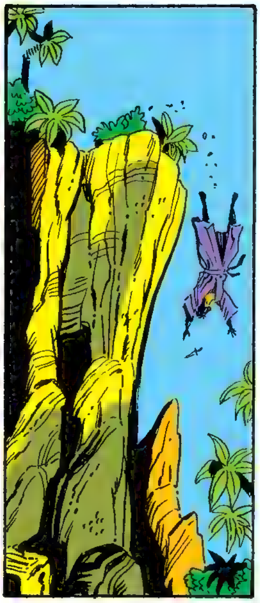
"AS A CHILD IN HONAN, CHINA, I WITNESSED MY FATHER EXPRESS **GRATITUDE** TO A DACOIT WHO HAD SAVED HIS LIFE FROM AN ENEMY'S **ATTACK**. TO MY KNOWLEDGE, IT WAS THE **ONLY** TIME MY FATHER EVINCED SUCH EMOTION.


... BUT FU MANCHU STILL WISHES YOUR **DEATH**!!

"SEVERAL YEARS LATER, THE DACOIT FAILED TO **ASSASSINATE** THAT SAME ENEMY. IT WAS **WHISPERED** THAT MY FATHER ORDERED THE DACOIT EXECUTED BY **SLOW TORTURE**. I DID NOT BELIEVE THE WHISPERS...

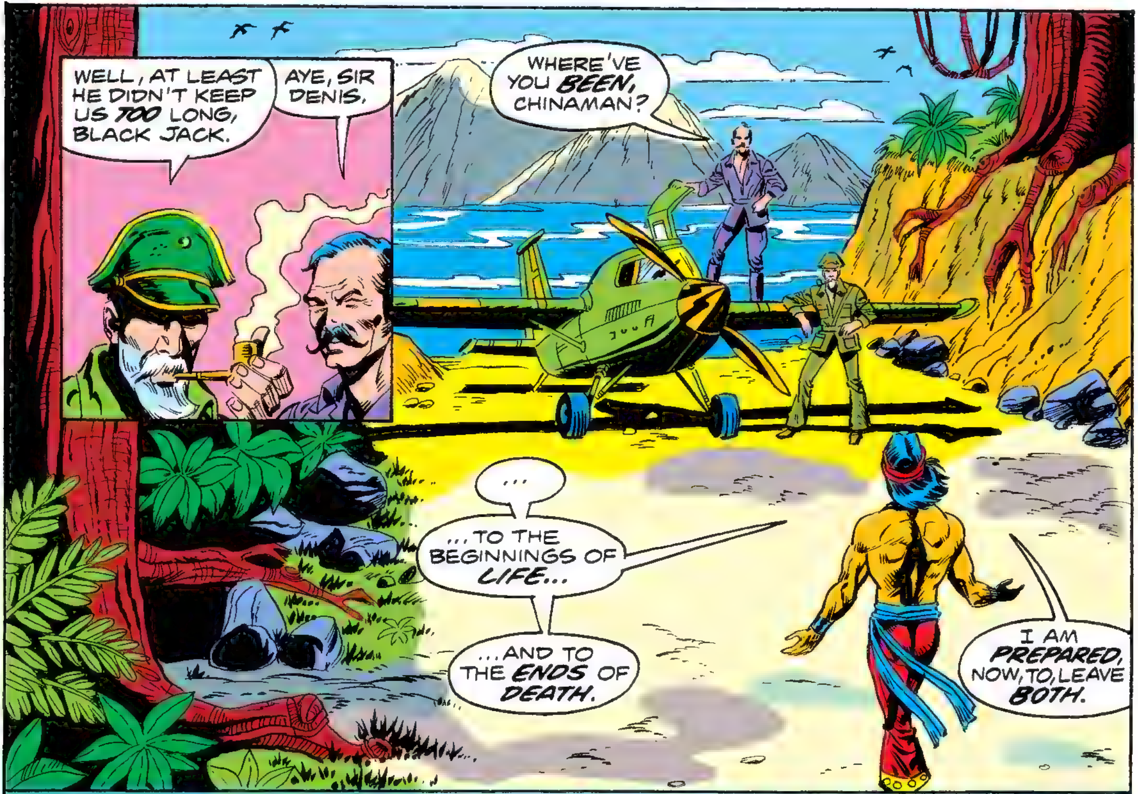


"... UNTIL MY FATHER FORCED ME TO SLAY **DR. PETRIE**, AND SIR DENIS NAYLAND SMITH FORCED ME TO **REALIZE** WHAT I HAD **DONE**. SINCE THEN, MANY MEN FOR VARIOUS REASONS HAVE BEEN EXECUTED BY MY FATHER'S HAND.

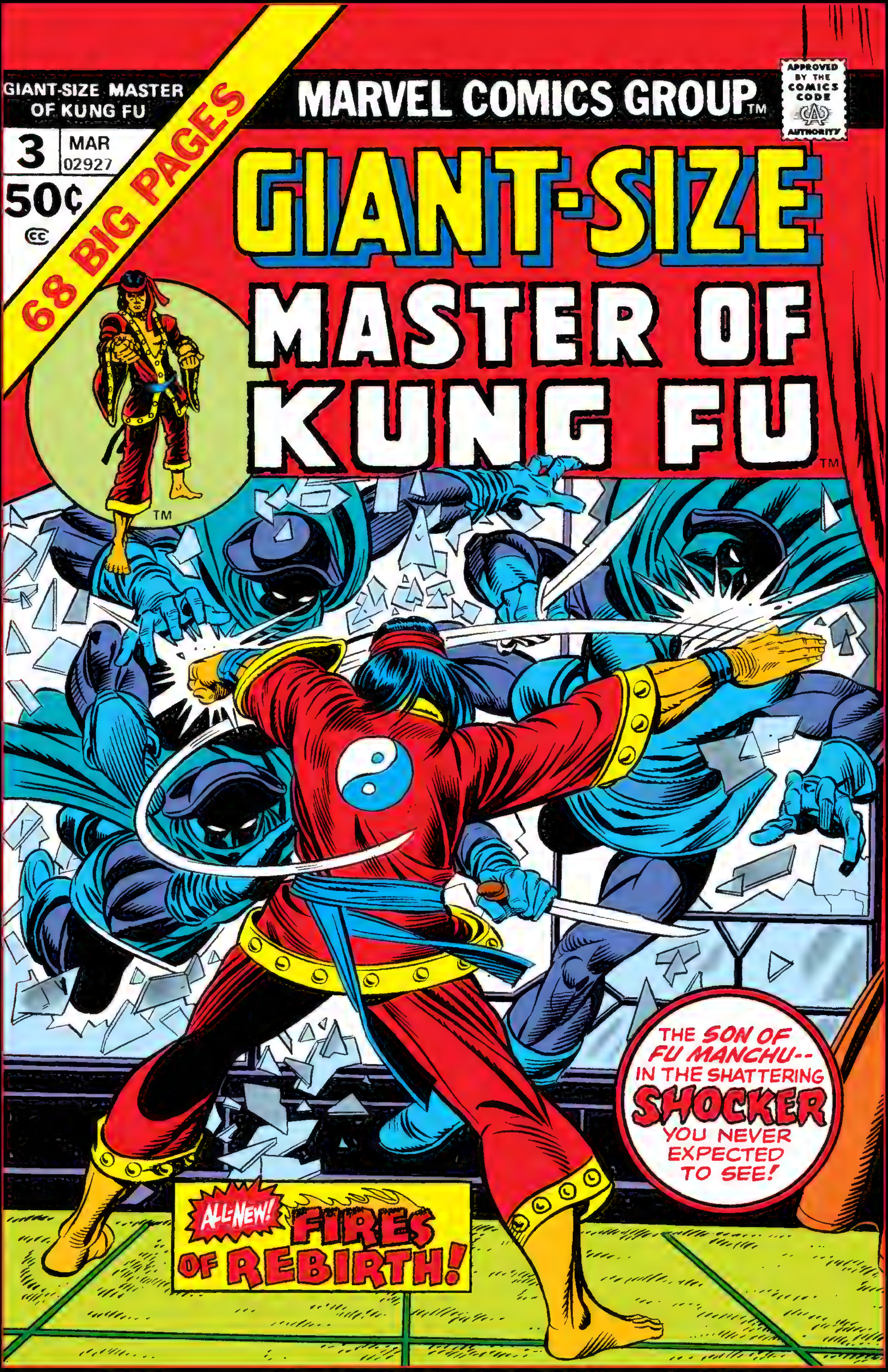


"TODAY, I HAVE SPARED FU MANCHU THE SIN OF **HYPOCRISY**... BY REFUSING TO **DIE**.

"IT DOES NOT **PLEASE** ME."


WELL, AT LEAST HE DIDN'T KEEP US **TOO** LONG, BLACK JACK.
AYE, SIR DENIS.
WHERE'VE YOU **BEEN**, CHINAMAN?
...
... TO THE BEGINNINGS OF **LIFE**...
... AND TO THE **ENDS** OF **DEATH**.
I AM **PREPARED**, NOW, TO LEAVE **BOTH**.

NEXT ISSUE: THE DAUGHTER OF FU MANCHU!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THE SON OF FU MANCHU-- IN THE SHATTERING SHOCKER YOU NEVER EXPECTED TO SEE!
ALL-NEW! FIRES OF REBIRTH!

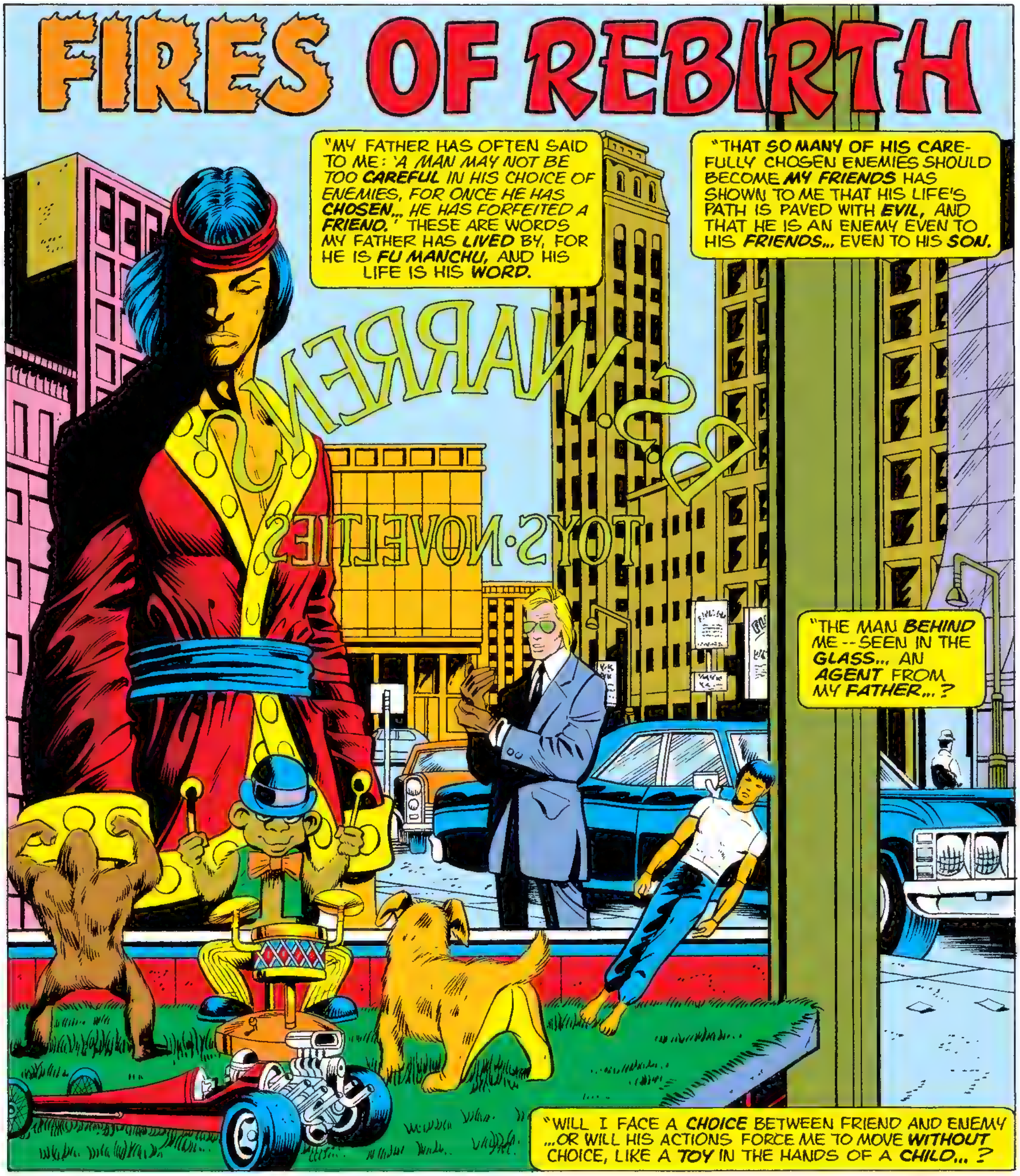
"Call me Shang-Chi, as my *father* did, when he raised me and molded my mind and my body in the vacuum of his Honan, China retreat. I learned many things from my father: That my name means "The Rising and Advancing of a Spirit," that my body could be forged into a living weapon through the discipline of kung fu, and that it might be used for the murder of a man called Dr. Petrie.

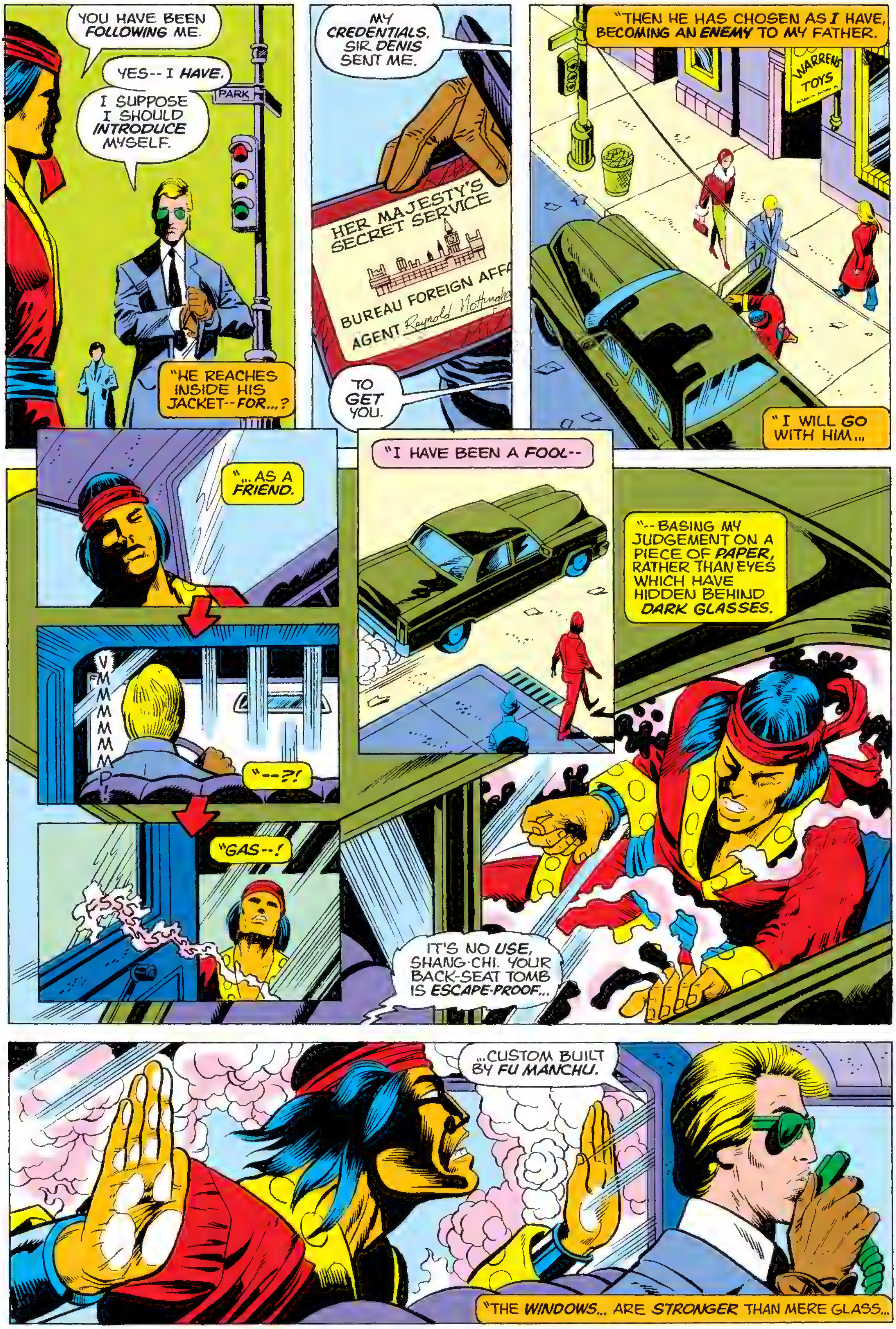
"Since then, I have learned that my father is **Dr. Fu Manchu** the most insidiously evil man on earth... and that to *honor* him would bring nothing but *dishonor* to the spirit of my *name*."

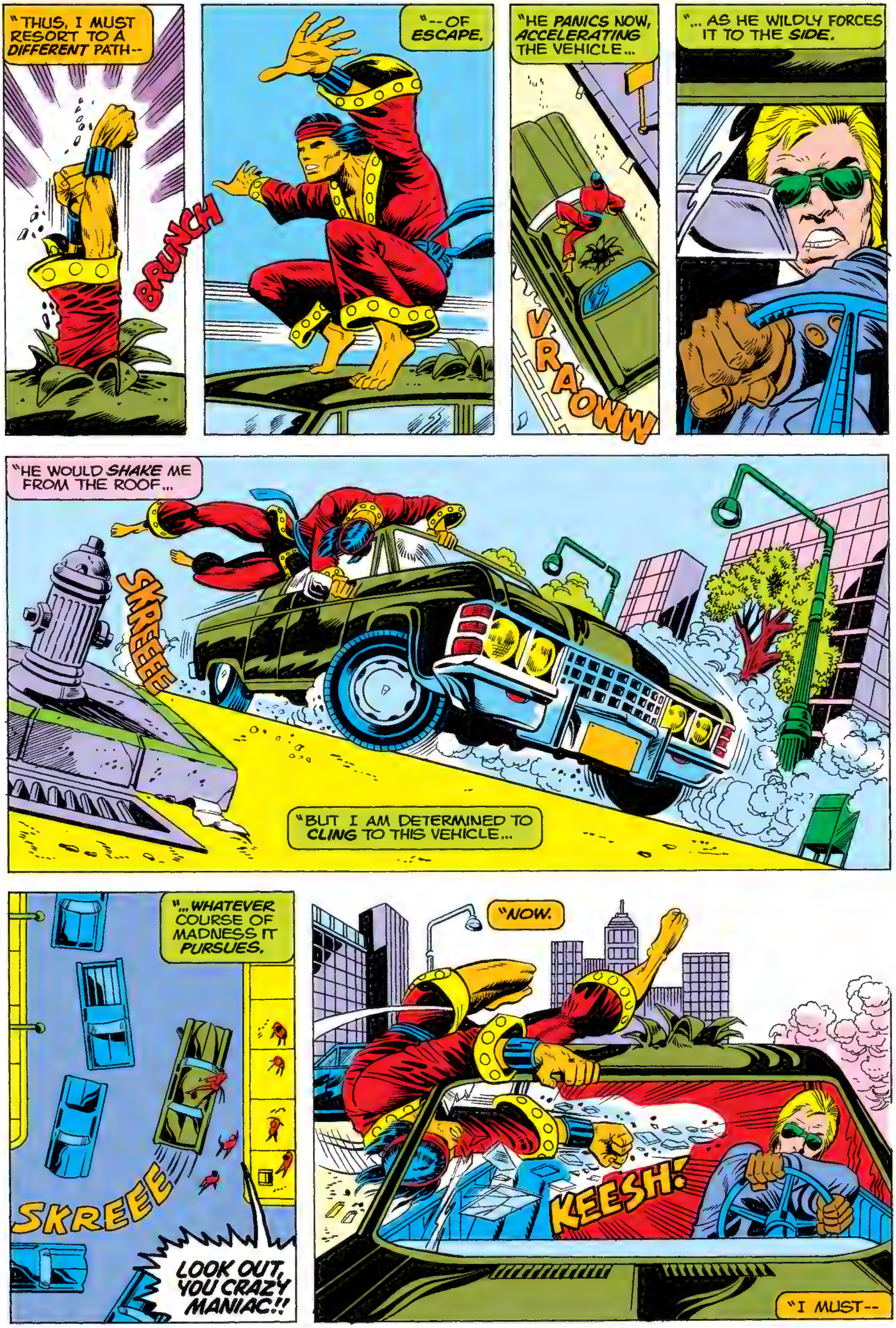
Stan Lee PRESENTS:

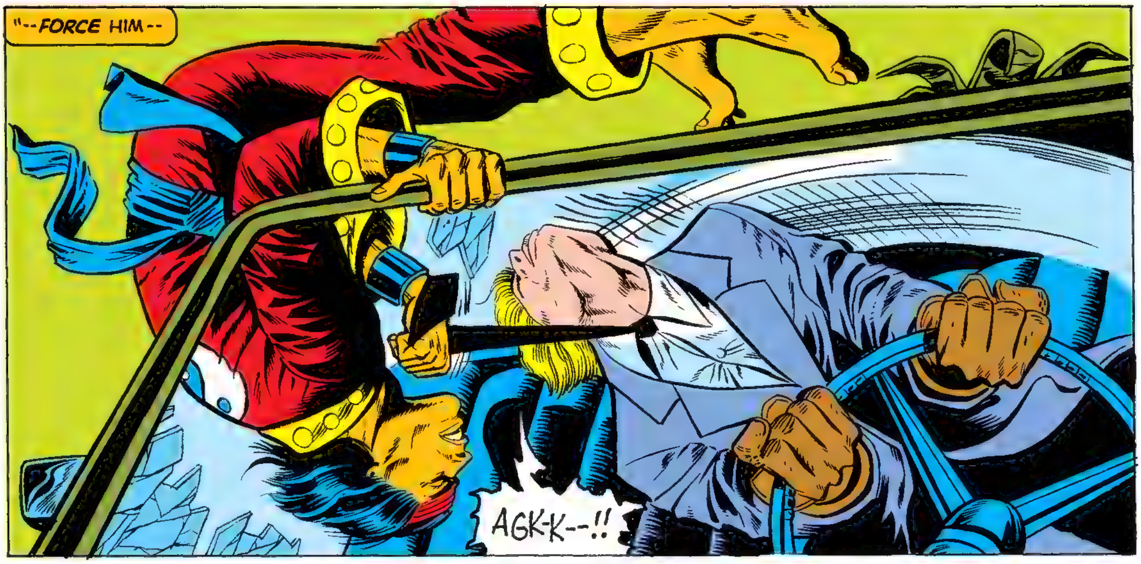
MASTER OF KUNG FU!™

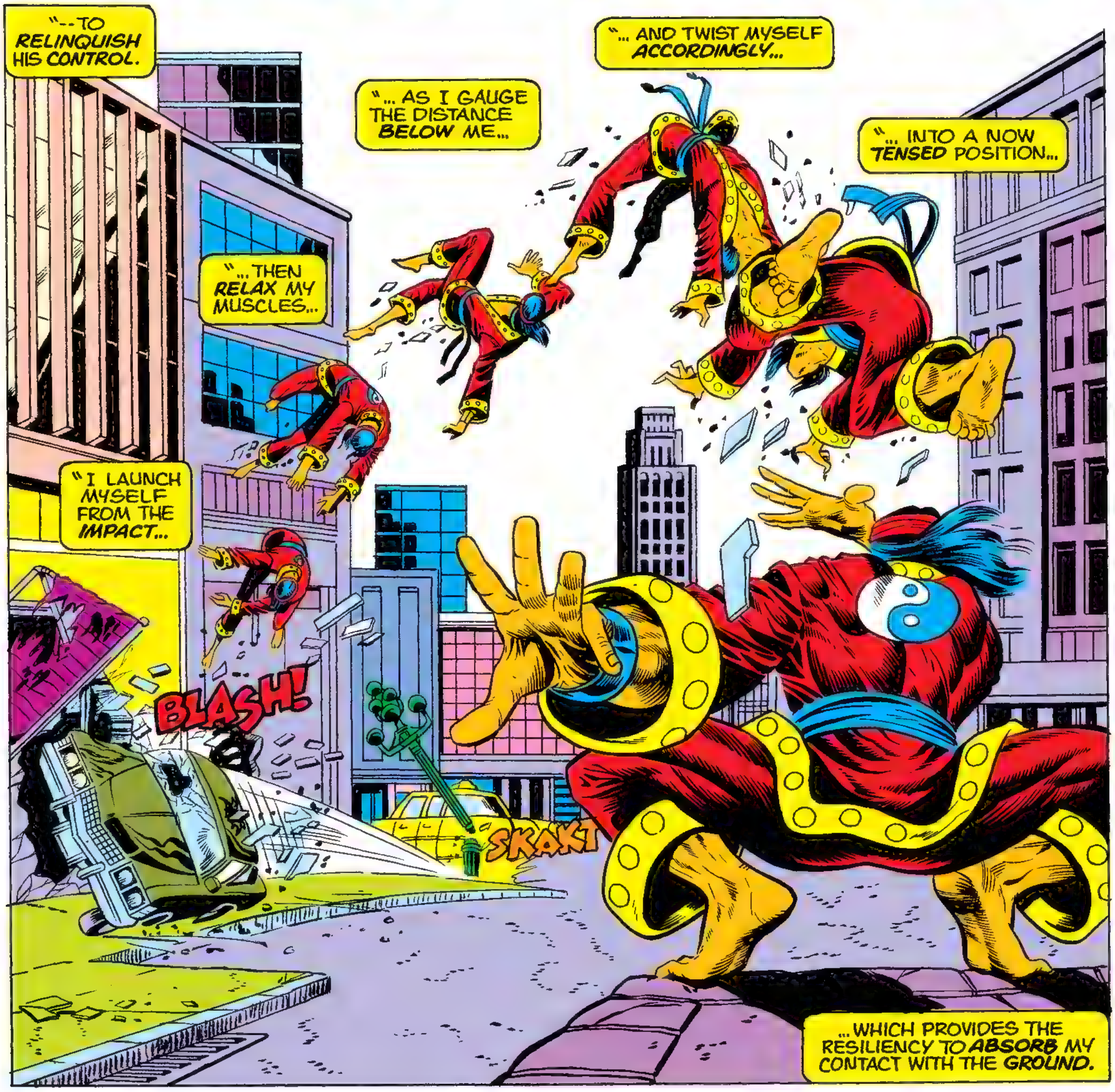
DOUG MOENCH *Thought* | **PAUL GULACY** *Vision* | VINNIE COLLETTA *Strength* | TOM ORZECHOWSKI, *Symbols* BILL MANTLO, *Hues* | **LEN WEIN** *Control*

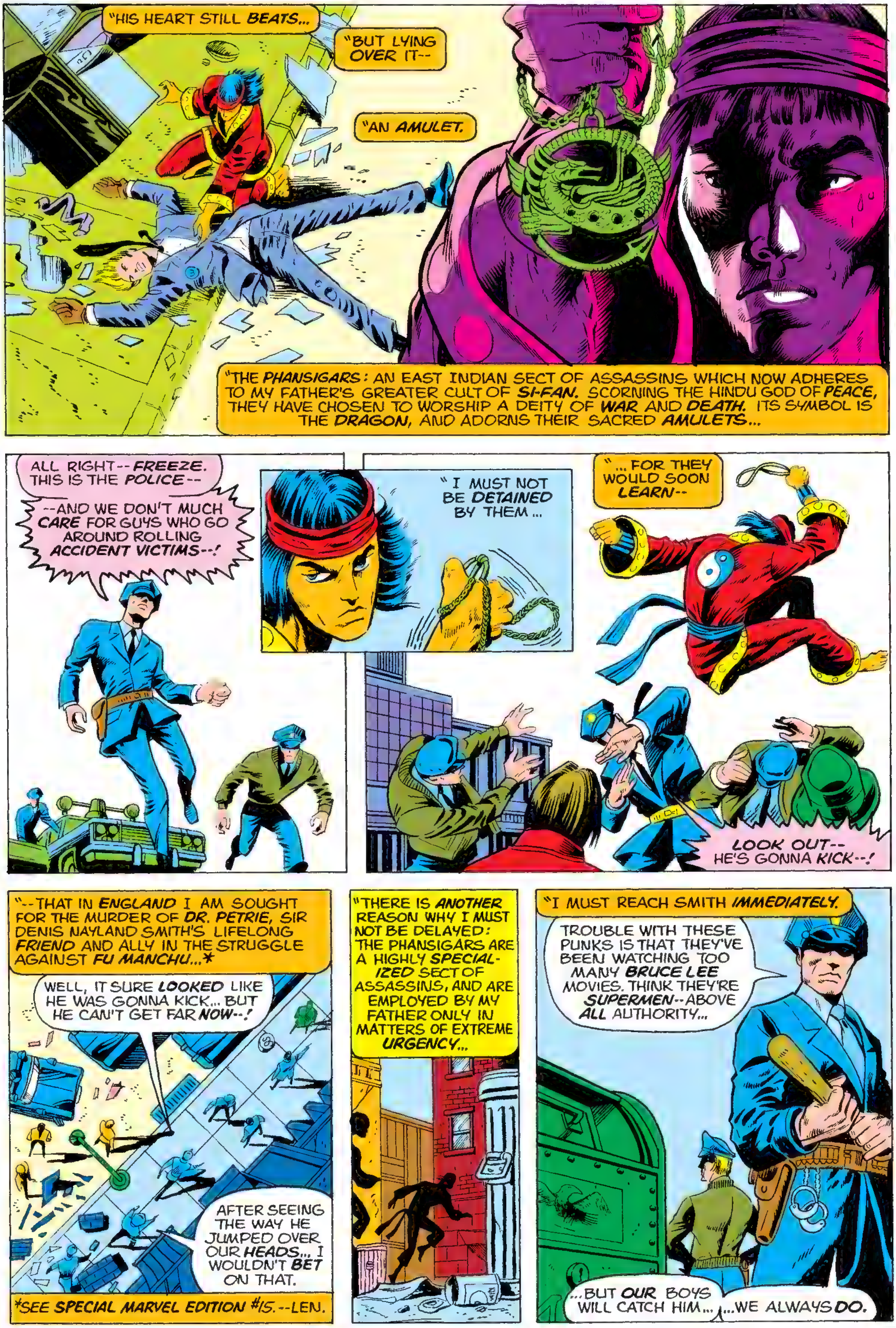

FIRES OF REBIRTH
"MY FATHER HAS OFTEN SAID TO ME: 'A MAN MAY NOT BE TOO CAREFUL IN HIS CHOICE OF ENEMIES, FOR ONCE HE HAS CHOSEN... HE HAS FORFEITED A FRIEND.' THESE ARE WORDS MY FATHER HAS LIVED BY, FOR HE IS FU MANCHU, AND HIS LIFE IS HIS WORD.
"THAT SO MANY OF HIS CAREFULLY CHOSEN ENEMIES SHOULD BECOME MY FRIENDS HAS SHOWN TO ME THAT HIS LIFE'S PATH IS PAVED WITH EVIL, AND THAT HE IS AN ENEMY EVEN TO HIS FRIENDS... EVEN TO HIS SON.
WARREN'S B.
TOYS·NOVELTIES
"THE MAN BEHIND ME -- SEEN IN THE GLASS... AN AGENT FROM MY FATHER...?
"WILL I FACE A CHOICE BETWEEN FRIEND AND ENEMY ...OR WILL HIS ACTIONS FORCE ME TO MOVE WITHOUT CHOICE, LIKE A TOY IN THE HANDS OF A CHILD...?

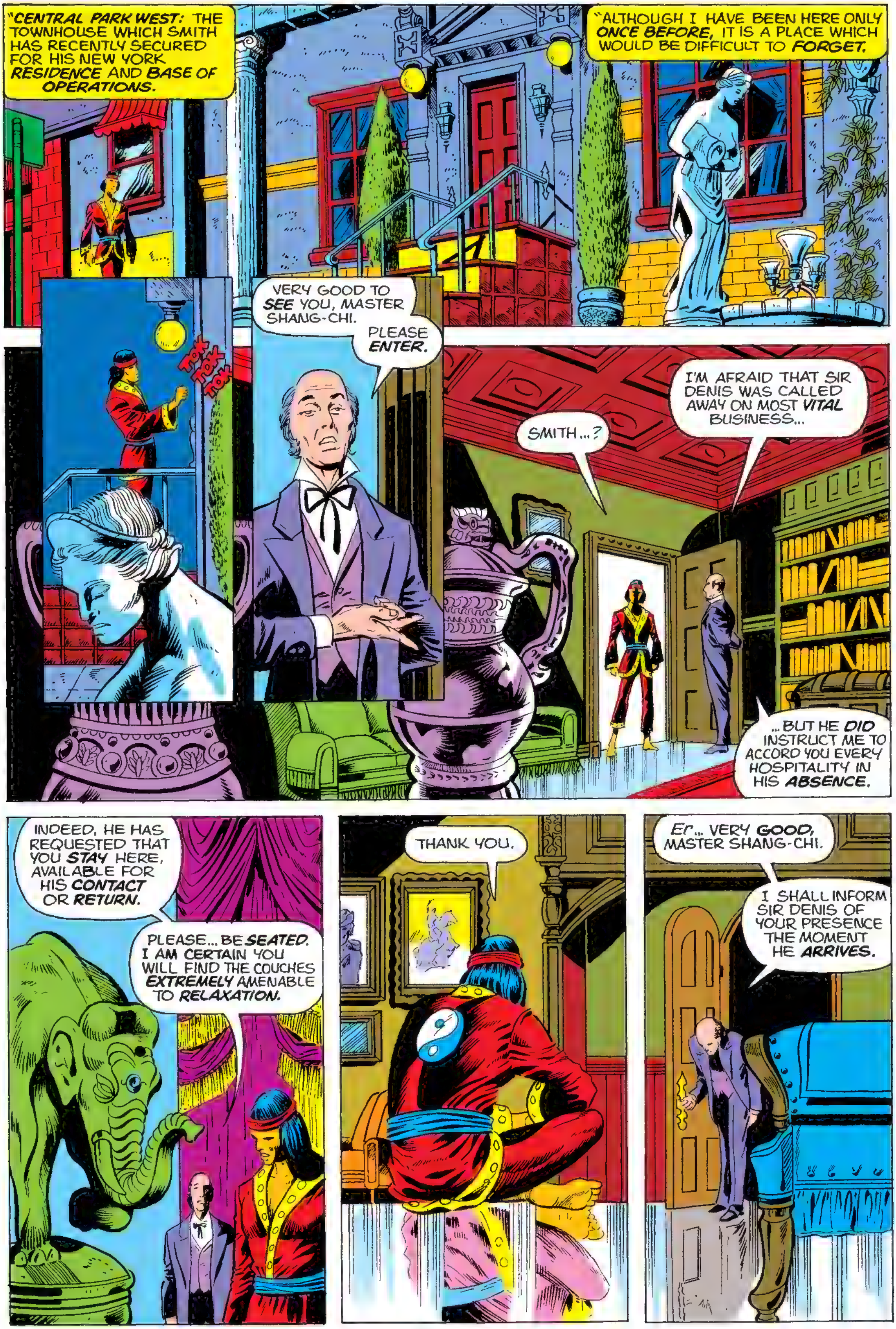

YOU HAVE BEEN FOLLOWING ME.
YES-- I HAVE.
I SUPPOSE I SHOULD INTRODUCE MYSELF.
PARK
"HE REACHES INSIDE HIS JACKET--FOR...?
MY CREDENTIALS. SIR DENIS SENT ME.
HER MAJESTY'S SECRET SERVICE
BUREAU FOREIGN AFFA
AGENT Reynold Nottingha
TO GET YOU.
"THEN HE HAS CHOSEN AS I HAVE, BECOMING AN ENEMY TO MY FATHER.
WARRENS TOYS
"I WILL GO WITH HIM...
"...AS A FRIEND.
VMMMMMMP!
"--?!
"GAS--!
FSSSSSSS
"I HAVE BEEN A FOOL--
"--BASING MY JUDGEMENT ON A PIECE OF PAPER, RATHER THAN EYES WHICH HAVE HIDDEN BEHIND DARK GLASSES.
IT'S NO USE, SHANG-CHI. YOUR BACK-SEAT TOMB IS ESCAPE-PROOF...
...CUSTOM BUILT BY FU MANCHU.
"THE WINDOWS... ARE STRONGER THAN MERE GLASS...

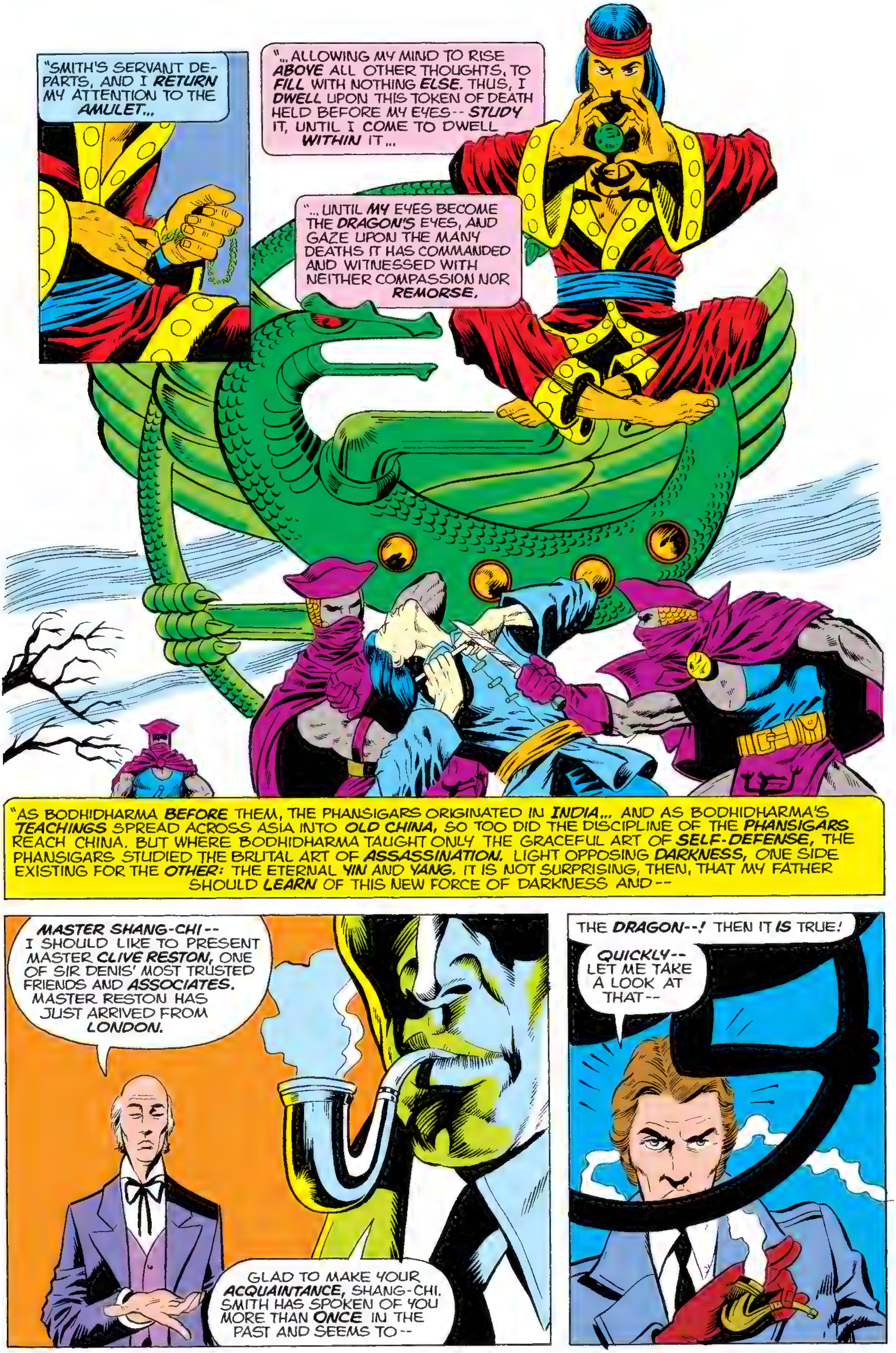

"THUS, I MUST RESORT TO A *DIFFERENT* PATH--
BRUNCH
"--OF *ESCAPE.*
"HE *PANICS* NOW, *ACCELERATING* THE VEHICLE...
VRAOWW
"... AS HE WILDLY FORCES IT TO THE *SIDE.*
"HE WOULD *SHAKE* ME FROM THE ROOF...
SKREEEE
"BUT I AM DETERMINED TO *CLING* TO THIS VEHICLE...
"... *WHATEVER* COURSE OF MADNESS IT *PURSUES.*
SKREEE
LOOK OUT, YOU CRAZY MANIAC!!
"*NOW.*
KEESH!
"I MUST--

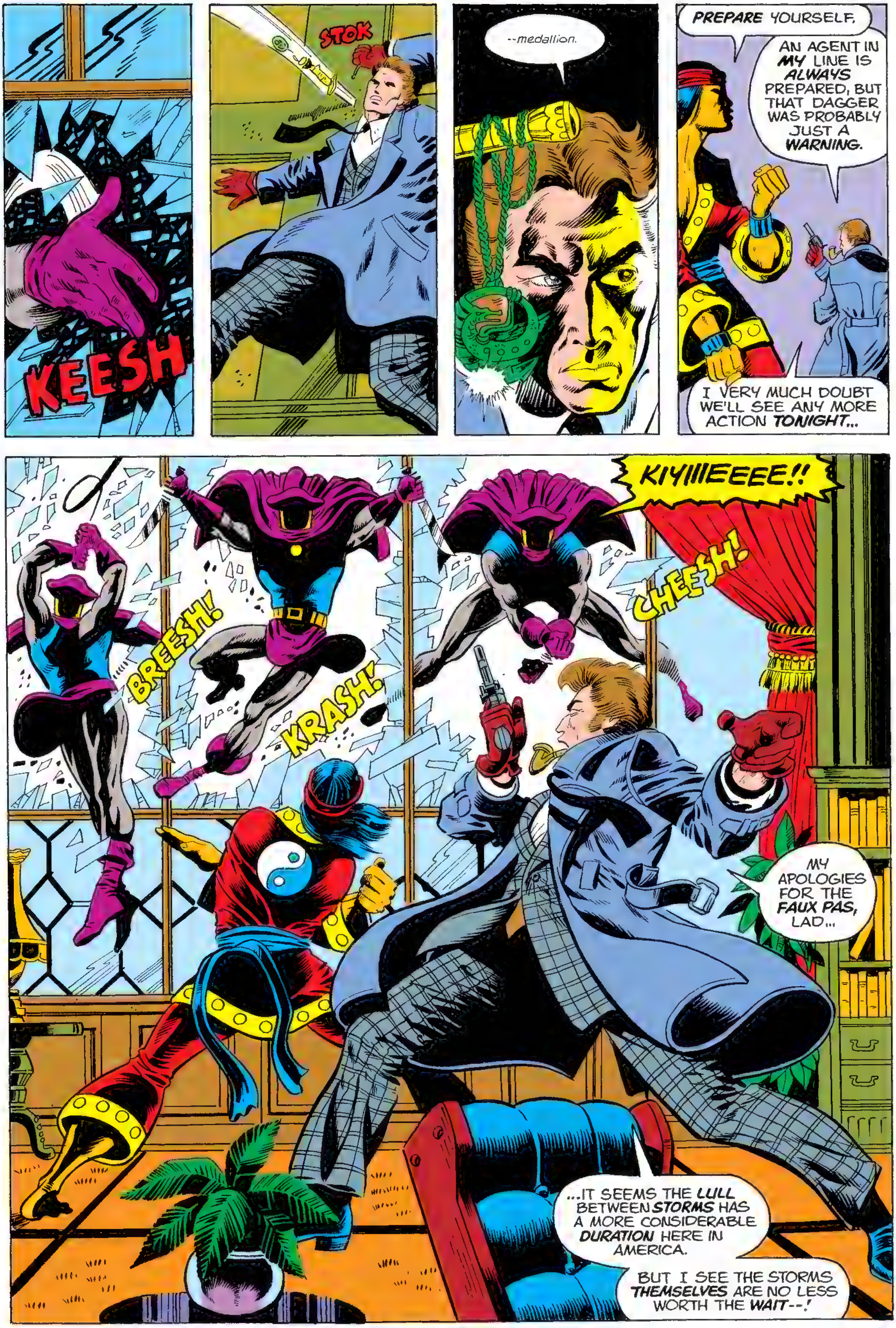

"--FORCE HIM--
AGK-K--!!

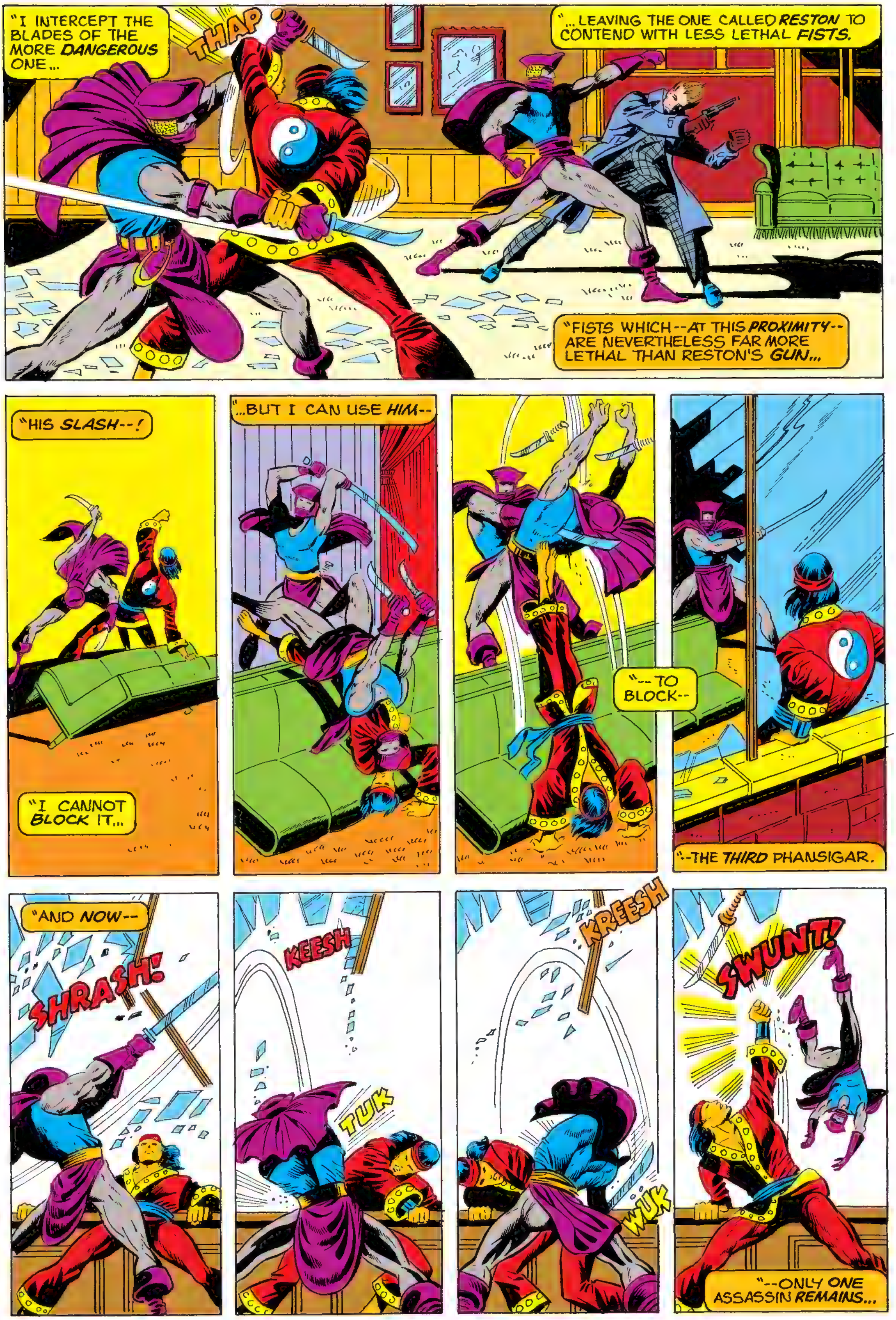

"--TO RELINQUISH HIS CONTROL.
"I LAUNCH MYSELF FROM THE IMPACT...
"...THEN RELAX MY MUSCLES...
"... AS I GAUGE THE DISTANCE BELOW ME...
"... AND TWIST MYSELF ACCORDINGLY...
"... INTO A NOW TENSED POSITION...
...WHICH PROVIDES THE RESILIENCY TO ABSORB MY CONTACT WITH THE GROUND.
BLASH!
SKAK!

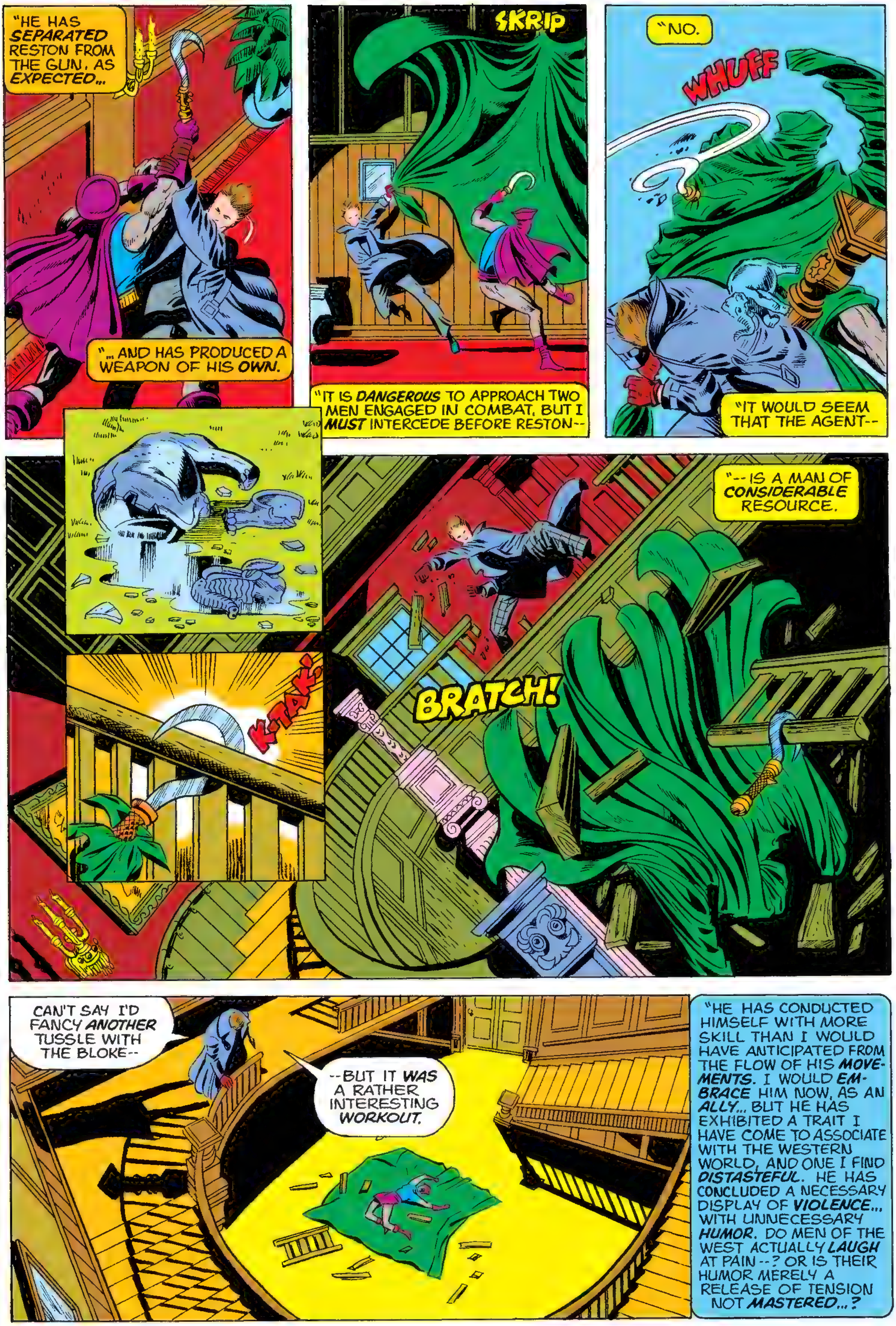

"HIS HEART STILL **BEATS...**
"BUT LYING **OVER** IT--
"AN **AMULET.**
"THE **PHANSIGARS**: AN EAST INDIAN SECT OF ASSASSINS WHICH NOW ADHERES TO MY FATHER'S GREATER CULT OF **SI-FAN.** SCORNING THE HINDU GOD OF **PEACE,** THEY HAVE CHOSEN TO WORSHIP A DEITY OF **WAR** AND **DEATH.** ITS SYMBOL IS THE **DRAGON,** AND ADORNS THEIR SACRED **AMULETS...**
ALL RIGHT-- **FREEZE.** THIS IS THE **POLICE**--
--AND WE DON'T MUCH **CARE** FOR GUYS WHO GO AROUND ROLLING **ACCIDENT VICTIMS**--!
"I MUST NOT BE **DETAINED** BY THEM...
"...FOR THEY WOULD SOON **LEARN**--
LOOK OUT-- HE'S GONNA **KICK**--!
"--THAT IN **ENGLAND** I AM SOUGHT FOR THE MURDER OF **DR. PETRIE,** SIR DENIS NAYLAND SMITH'S LIFELONG **FRIEND** AND ALLY IN THE STRUGGLE AGAINST **FU MANCHU...***
WELL, IT SURE **LOOKED** LIKE HE WAS GONNA KICK... BUT HE CAN'T GET FAR **NOW**--!
AFTER SEEING THE WAY HE JUMPED OVER OUR **HEADS...** I WOULDN'T **BET** ON THAT.
*SEE **SPECIAL MARVEL EDITION #15.**--LEN.
"THERE IS **ANOTHER** REASON WHY I MUST NOT BE DELAYED: THE PHANSIGARS ARE A HIGHLY **SPECIALIZED** SECT OF ASSASSINS, AND ARE EMPLOYED BY MY FATHER ONLY IN MATTERS OF EXTREME **URGENCY...**
"I MUST REACH SMITH **IMMEDIATELY.**
TROUBLE WITH THESE PUNKS IS THAT THEY'VE BEEN WATCHING TOO MANY **BRUCE LEE** MOVIES. THINK THEY'RE **SUPERMEN**--ABOVE **ALL** AUTHORITY...
...BUT **OUR** BOYS WILL CATCH HIM...
...WE ALWAYS **DO.**

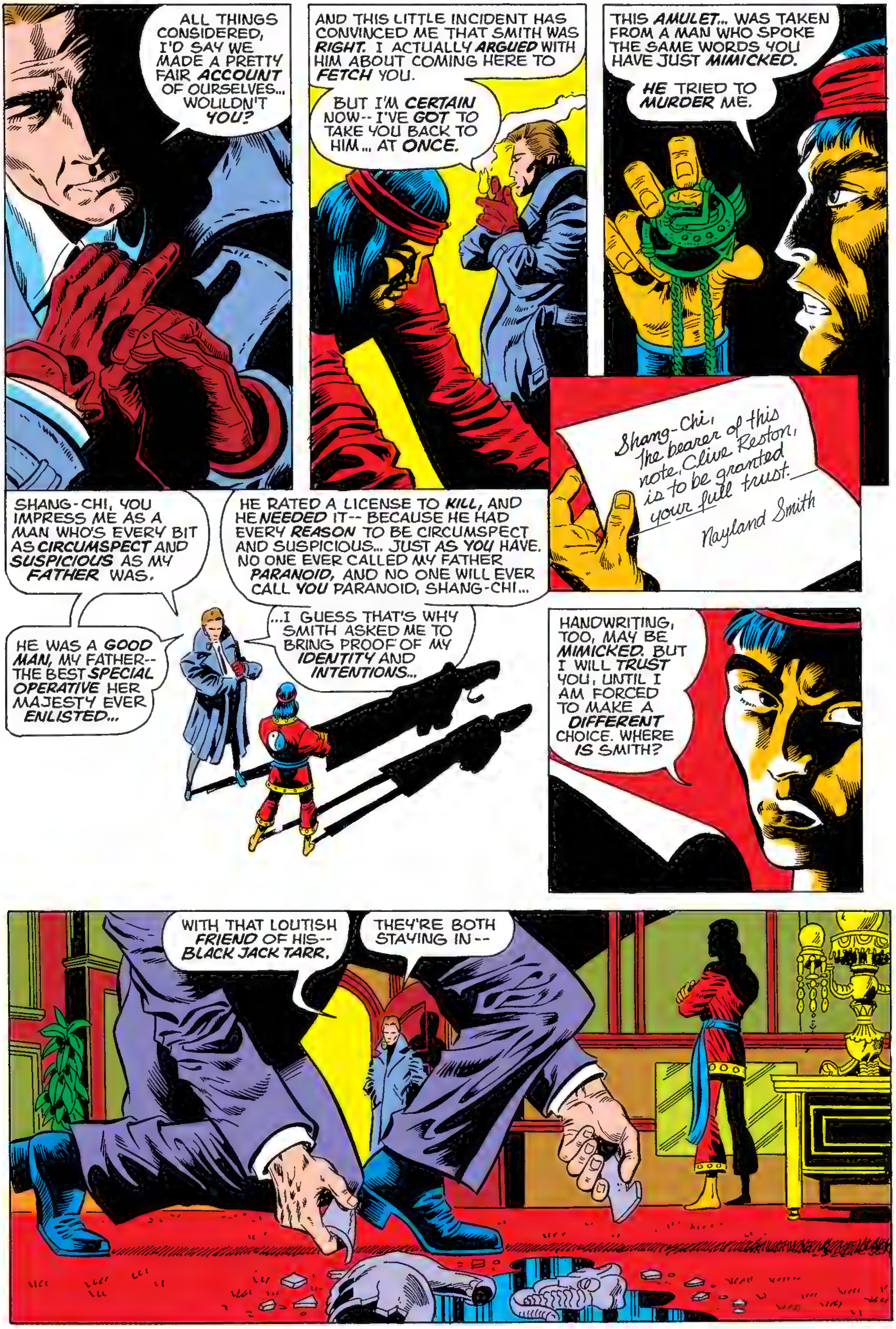

"CENTRAL PARK WEST: THE TOWNHOUSE WHICH SMITH HAS RECENTLY SECURED FOR HIS NEW YORK RESIDENCE AND BASE OF OPERATIONS.
"ALTHOUGH I HAVE BEEN HERE ONLY ONCE BEFORE, IT IS A PLACE WHICH WOULD BE DIFFICULT TO FORGET.
TOK TOK TOK
VERY GOOD TO SEE YOU, MASTER SHANG-CHI.
PLEASE ENTER.
SMITH...?
I'M AFRAID THAT SIR DENIS WAS CALLED AWAY ON MOST VITAL BUSINESS...
...BUT HE DID INSTRUCT ME TO ACCORD YOU EVERY HOSPITALITY IN HIS ABSENCE.
INDEED, HE HAS REQUESTED THAT YOU STAY HERE, AVAILABLE FOR HIS CONTACT OR RETURN.
PLEASE... BE SEATED. I AM CERTAIN YOU WILL FIND THE COUCHES EXTREMELY AMENABLE TO RELAXATION.
THANK YOU.
Er... VERY GOOD, MASTER SHANG-CHI.
I SHALL INFORM SIR DENIS OF YOUR PRESENCE THE MOMENT HE ARRIVES.

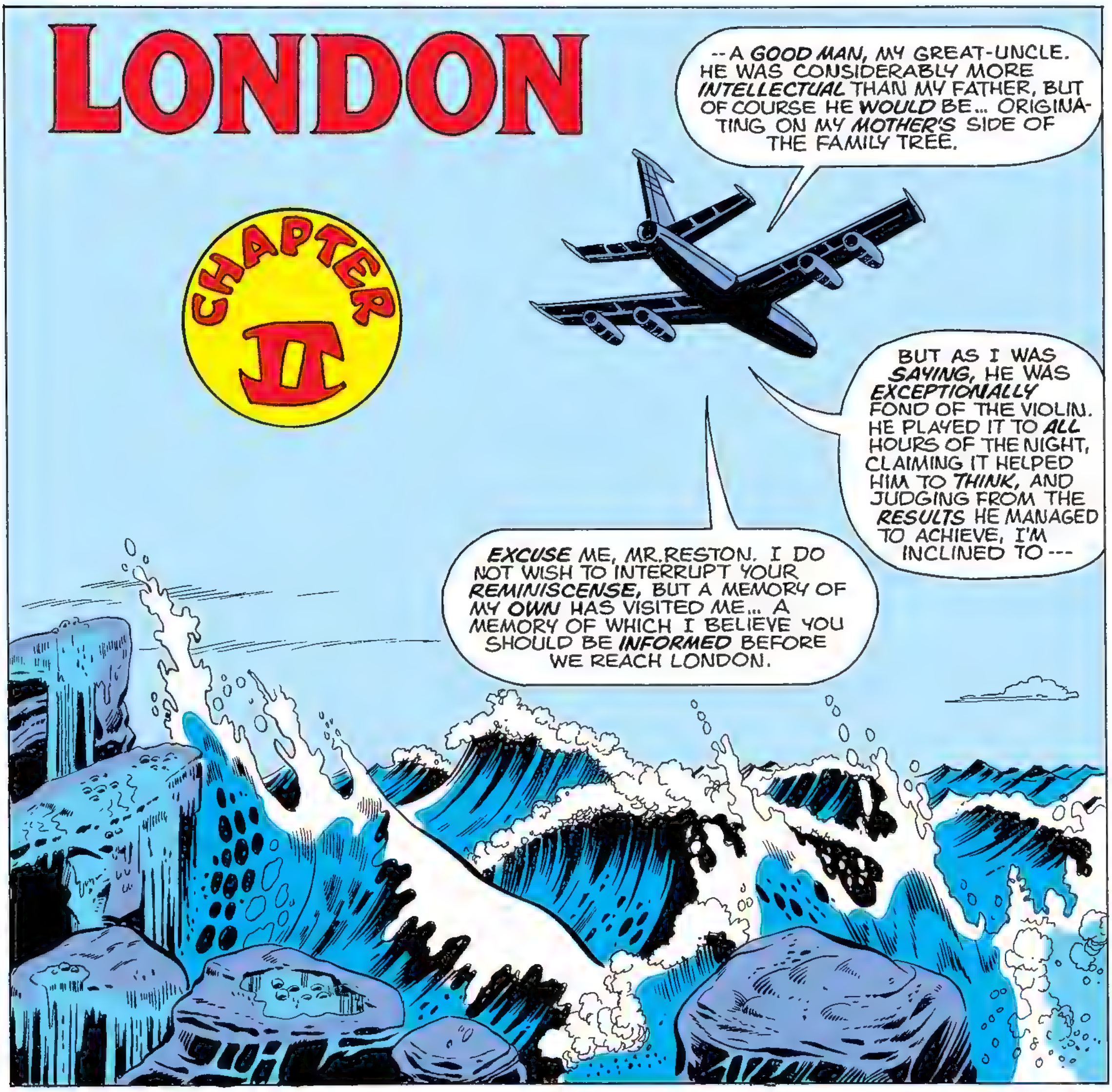

"SMITH'S SERVANT DEPARTS, AND I **RETURN** MY ATTENTION TO THE **AMULET**...
"... ALLOWING MY MIND TO RISE **ABOVE** ALL OTHER THOUGHTS, TO **FILL** WITH NOTHING **ELSE**. THUS, I **DWELL** UPON THIS TOKEN OF DEATH HELD BEFORE MY EYES-- **STUDY** IT, UNTIL I COME TO DWELL **WITHIN** IT...
"... UNTIL **MY** EYES BECOME THE **DRAGON'S** EYES, AND GAZE UPON THE MANY DEATHS IT HAS COMMANDED AND WITNESSED WITH NEITHER COMPASSION NOR **REMORSE**.
"AS BODHIDHARMA **BEFORE** THEM, THE PHANSIGARS ORIGINATED IN **INDIA**... AND AS BODHIDHARMA'S **TEACHINGS** SPREAD ACROSS ASIA INTO **OLD CHINA**, SO TOO DID THE DISCIPLINE OF THE **PHANSIGARS** REACH CHINA. BUT WHERE BODHIDHARMA TAUGHT ONLY THE GRACEFUL ART OF **SELF-DEFENSE**, THE PHANSIGARS STUDIED THE BRUTAL ART OF **ASSASSINATION**. LIGHT OPPOSING **DARKNESS**, ONE SIDE EXISTING FOR THE **OTHER**: THE ETERNAL **YIN** AND **YANG**. IT IS NOT SURPRISING, THEN, THAT MY FATHER SHOULD **LEARN** OF THIS NEW FORCE OF DARKNESS AND--
MASTER SHANG-CHI-- I SHOULD LIKE TO PRESENT MASTER **CLIVE RESTON**, ONE OF SIR DENIS' MOST TRUSTED FRIENDS AND **ASSOCIATES**. MASTER RESTON HAS JUST ARRIVED FROM **LONDON**.
GLAD TO MAKE YOUR **ACQUAINTANCE**, SHANG-CHI. SMITH HAS SPOKEN OF YOU MORE THAN **ONCE** IN THE PAST AND SEEMS TO--
THE **DRAGON**--! THEN IT **IS** TRUE!
QUICKLY-- LET ME TAKE A LOOK AT THAT--

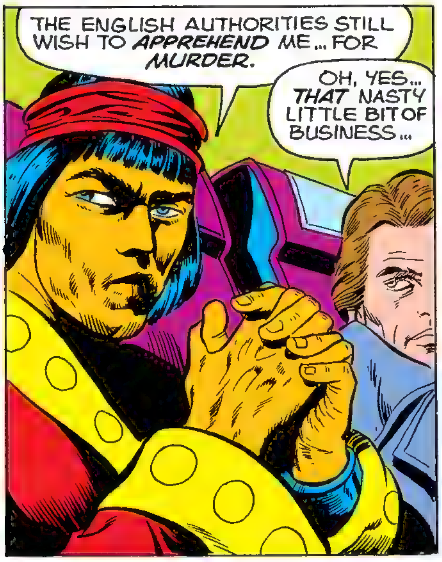

KEESH
STOK
--medallion.
PREPARE YOURSELF.
AN AGENT IN MY LINE IS ALWAYS PREPARED, BUT THAT DAGGER WAS PROBABLY JUST A WARNING.
I VERY MUCH DOUBT WE'LL SEE ANY MORE ACTION TONIGHT...
KIYIIIEEEE!!
BREESH!
KRASH!
CHEESH!
MY APOLOGIES FOR THE FAUX PAS, LAD...
...IT SEEMS THE LULL BETWEEN STORMS HAS A MORE CONSIDERABLE DURATION HERE IN AMERICA.
BUT I SEE THE STORMS THEMSELVES ARE NO LESS WORTH THE WAIT--!

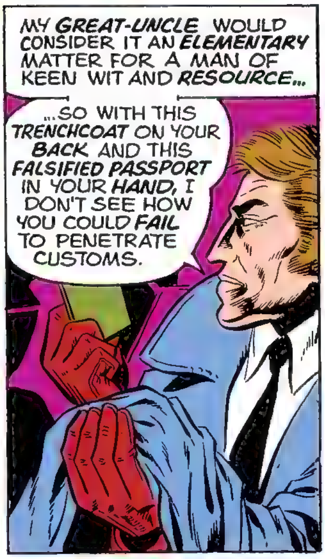

"I INTERCEPT THE BLADES OF THE MORE *DANGEROUS* ONE...
THAP
"...LEAVING THE ONE CALLED *RESTON* TO CONTEND WITH LESS LETHAL *FISTS.*
"FISTS WHICH--AT THIS *PROXIMITY*--ARE NEVERTHELESS FAR MORE LETHAL THAN RESTON'S *GUN*...
"HIS *SLASH*--!
"I CANNOT *BLOCK* IT...
"...BUT I CAN USE *HIM*--
"--TO BLOCK--
"--THE *THIRD* PHANSIGAR.
"AND *NOW*--
SHRASH!
KEESH
TUK
KREESH
WUK
SWUNT!
"--ONLY ONE ASSASSIN *REMAINS*...

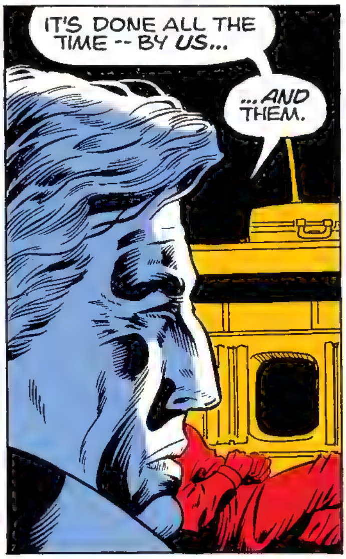

"HE HAS *SEPARATED* RESTON FROM THE GUN, AS *EXPECTED*...
"...AND HAS PRODUCED A WEAPON OF HIS *OWN*.
SKRIP
"IT IS *DANGEROUS* TO APPROACH TWO MEN ENGAGED IN COMBAT, BUT I *MUST* INTERCEDE BEFORE RESTON--
"NO.
WHUFF
"IT WOULD SEEM THAT THE AGENT--
"--IS A MAN OF *CONSIDERABLE* RESOURCE.
K-TAK!
BRATCH!
CAN'T SAY I'D FANCY *ANOTHER* TUSSLE WITH THE BLOKE--
--BUT IT *WAS* A RATHER INTERESTING *WORKOUT*.
"HE HAS CONDUCTED HIMSELF WITH MORE SKILL THAN I WOULD HAVE ANTICIPATED FROM THE FLOW OF HIS *MOVEMENTS*. I WOULD *EMBRACE* HIM NOW, AS AN *ALLY*... BUT HE HAS EXHIBITED A TRAIT I HAVE COME TO ASSOCIATE WITH THE WESTERN WORLD, AND ONE I FIND *DISTASTEFUL*. HE HAS CONCLUDED A NECESSARY DISPLAY OF *VIOLENCE*... WITH UNNECESSARY *HUMOR*. DO MEN OF THE WEST ACTUALLY *LAUGH* AT PAIN--? OR IS THEIR HUMOR MERELY A RELEASE OF TENSION NOT *MASTERED*...?

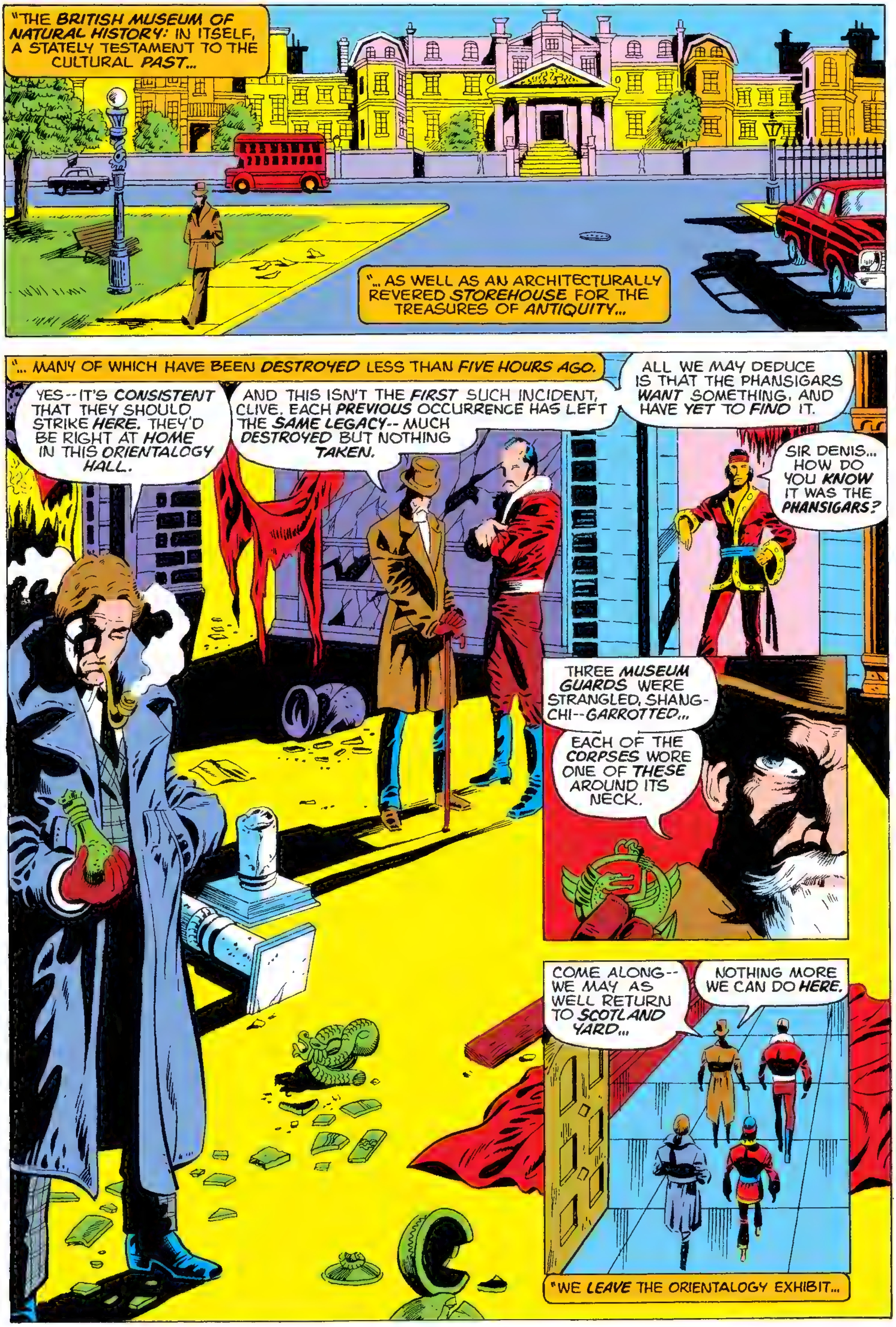

ALL THINGS CONSIDERED, I'D SAY WE MADE A PRETTY FAIR **ACCOUNT** OF OURSELVES... WOULDN'T **YOU?**
AND THIS LITTLE INCIDENT HAS CONVINCED ME THAT SMITH WAS **RIGHT.** I ACTUALLY **ARGUED** WITH HIM ABOUT COMING HERE TO **FETCH** YOU.
BUT I'M **CERTAIN** NOW-- I'VE **GOT** TO TAKE YOU BACK TO HIM... AT **ONCE.**
THIS **AMULET...** WAS TAKEN FROM A MAN WHO SPOKE THE SAME WORDS YOU HAVE JUST **MIMICKED.**
HE TRIED TO **MURDER** ME.
Shang-Chi, The bearer of this note, Clive Reston, is to be granted your full trust. Nayland Smith
SHANG-CHI, YOU IMPRESS ME AS A MAN WHO'S EVERY BIT AS **CIRCUMSPECT** AND **SUSPICIOUS** AS MY **FATHER** WAS.
HE RATED A LICENSE TO **KILL,** AND HE **NEEDED** IT-- BECAUSE HE HAD EVERY **REASON** TO BE CIRCUMSPECT AND SUSPICIOUS... JUST AS **YOU** HAVE. NO ONE EVER CALLED MY FATHER **PARANOID,** AND NO ONE WILL EVER CALL **YOU** PARANOID, SHANG-CHI...
HE WAS A **GOOD MAN,** MY FATHER-- THE BEST **SPECIAL OPERATIVE** HER MAJESTY EVER **ENLISTED...**
...I GUESS THAT'S WHY SMITH ASKED ME TO BRING PROOF OF MY **IDENTITY** AND **INTENTIONS...**
HANDWRITING, TOO, MAY BE **MIMICKED.** BUT I WILL **TRUST** YOU, UNTIL I AM FORCED TO MAKE A **DIFFERENT** CHOICE. WHERE **IS** SMITH?
WITH THAT LOUTISH **FRIEND** OF HIS-- **BLACK JACK TARR.**
THEY'RE BOTH STAYING IN --

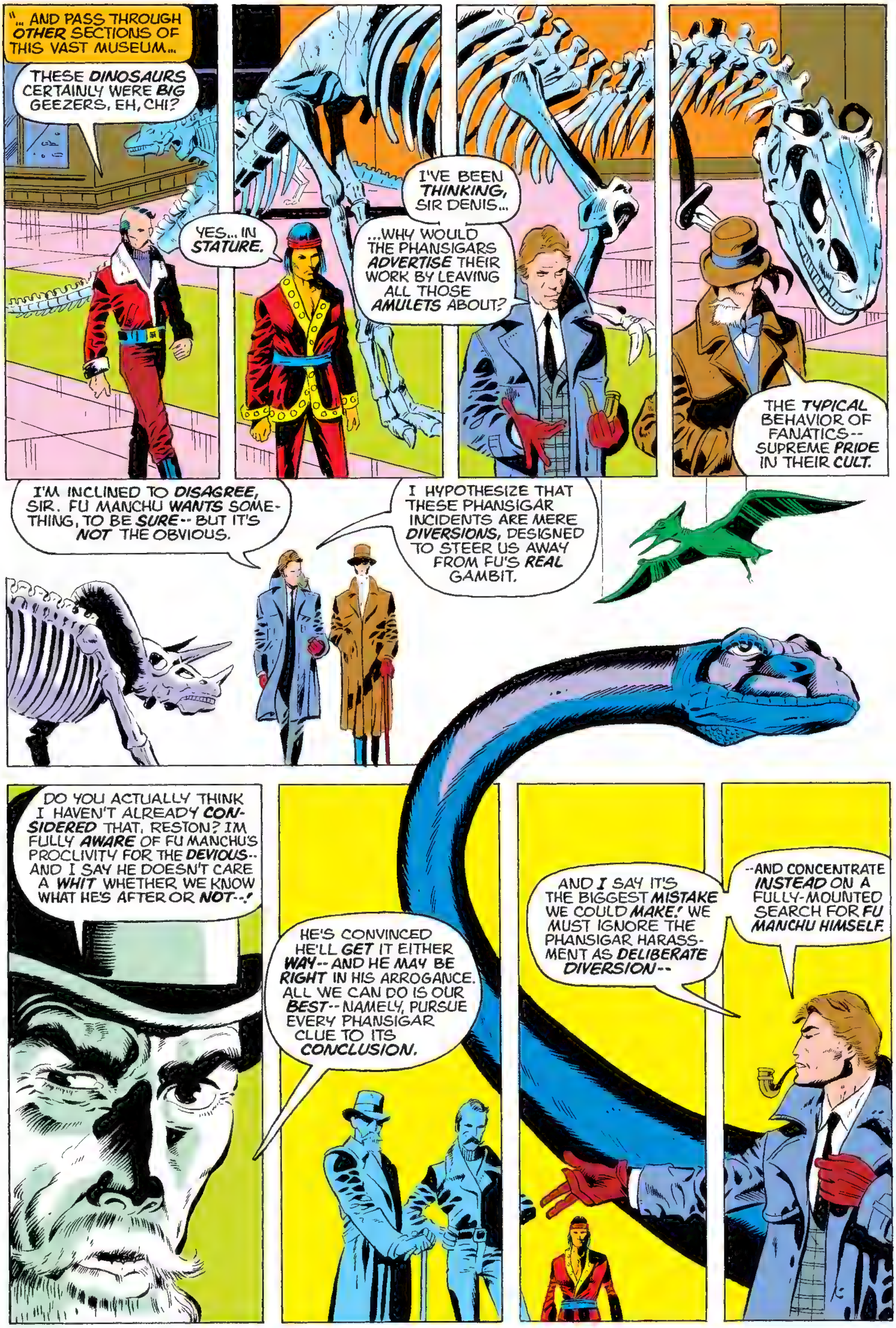

LONDON
CHAPTER II
--A GOOD MAN, MY GREAT-UNCLE. HE WAS CONSIDERABLY MORE INTELLECTUAL THAN MY FATHER, BUT OF COURSE HE WOULD BE... ORIGINATING ON MY MOTHER'S SIDE OF THE FAMILY TREE.
BUT AS I WAS SAYING, HE WAS EXCEPTIONALLY FOND OF THE VIOLIN. HE PLAYED IT TO ALL HOURS OF THE NIGHT, CLAIMING IT HELPED HIM TO THINK, AND JUDGING FROM THE RESULTS HE MANAGED TO ACHIEVE, I'M INCLINED TO---
EXCUSE ME, MR. RESTON. I DO NOT WISH TO INTERRUPT YOUR REMINISCENSE, BUT A MEMORY OF MY OWN HAS VISITED ME... A MEMORY OF WHICH I BELIEVE YOU SHOULD BE INFORMED BEFORE WE REACH LONDON.

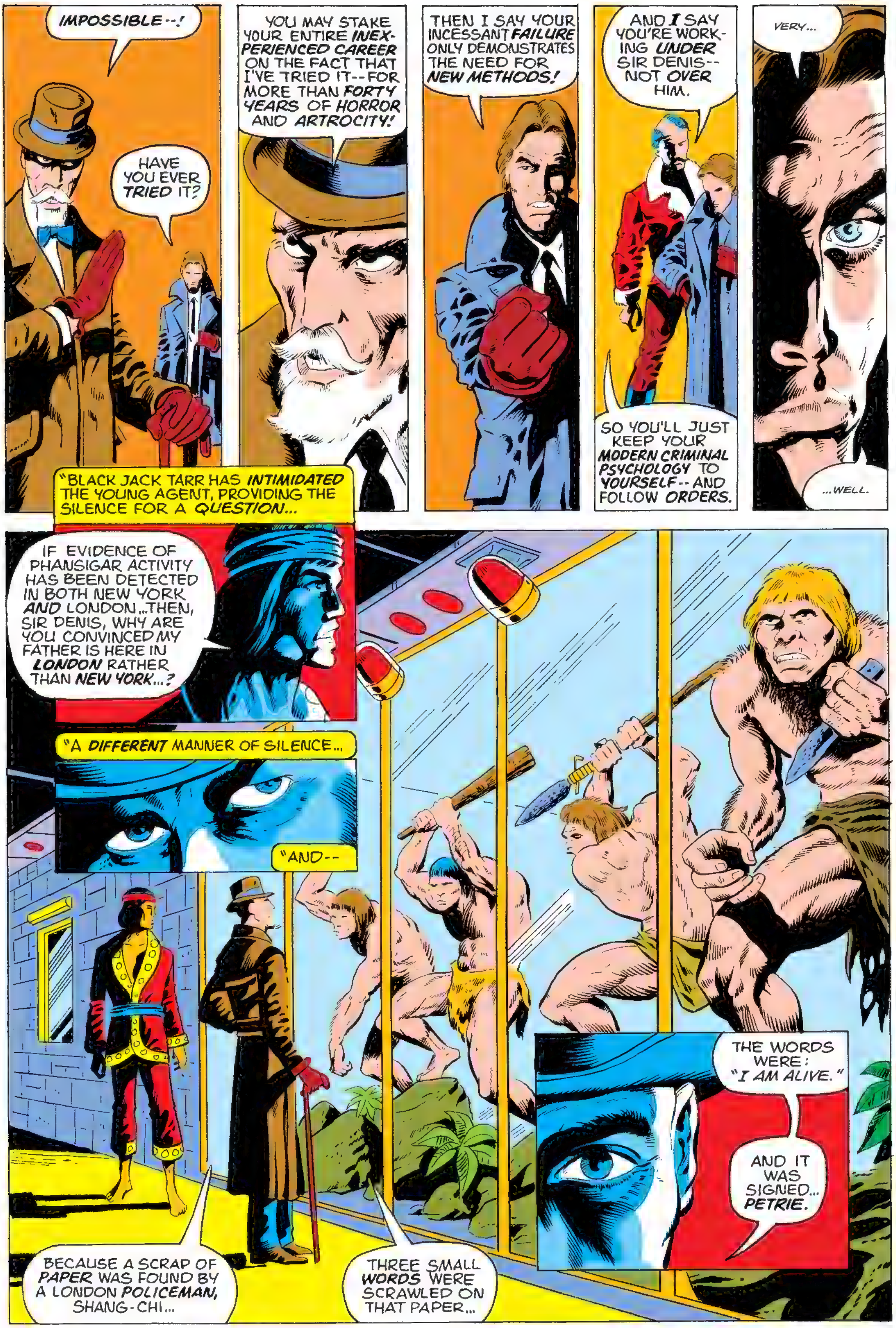

THE ENGLISH AUTHORITIES STILL WISH TO APPREHEND ME... FOR MURDER.
OH, YES... THAT NASTY LITTLE BIT OF BUSINESS...

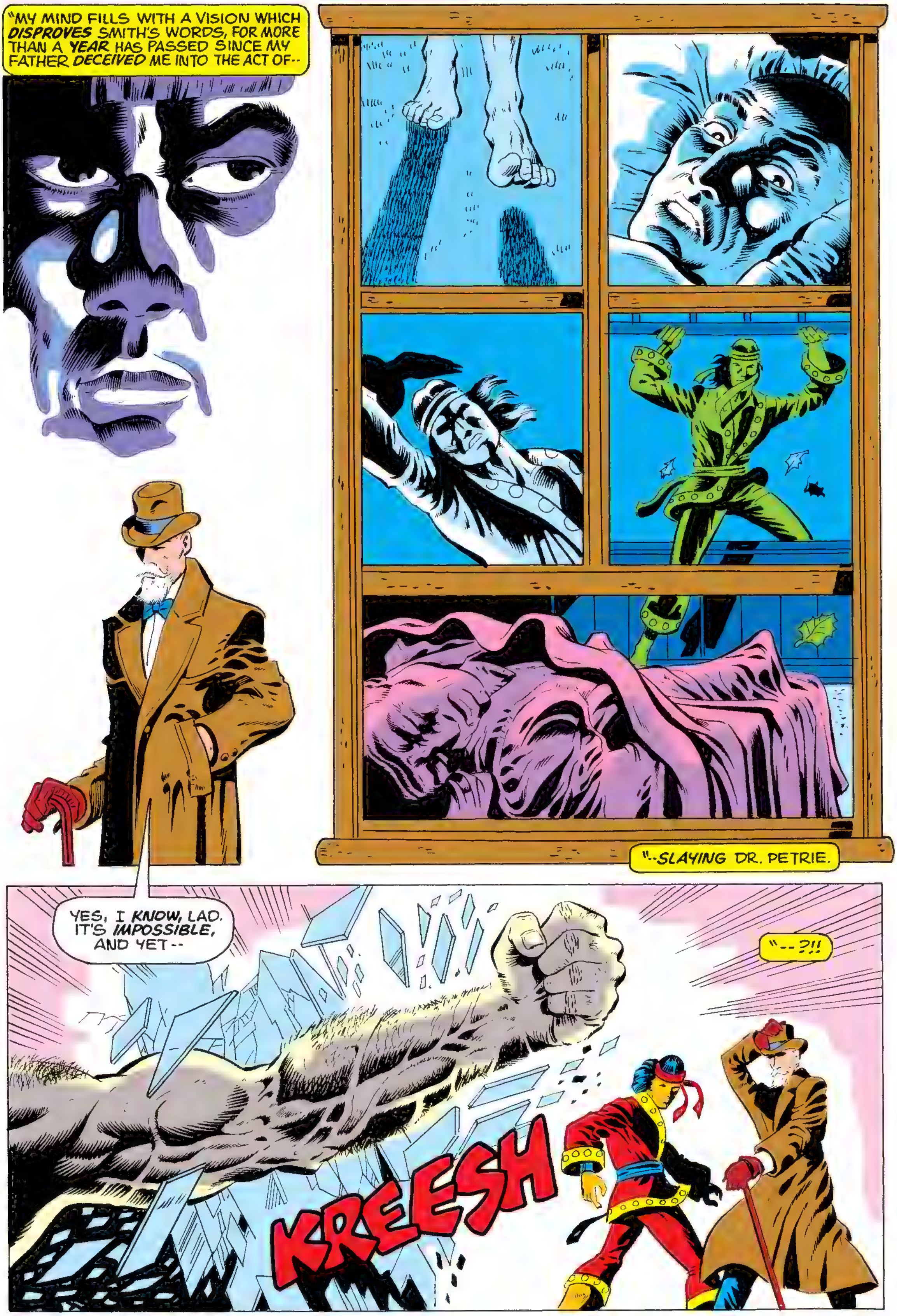

MY GREAT-UNCLE WOULD CONSIDER IT AN ELEMENTARY MATTER FOR A MAN OF KEEN WIT AND RESOURCE...
...SO WITH THIS TRENCHCOAT ON YOUR BACK AND THIS FALSIFIED PASSPORT IN YOUR HAND, I DON'T SEE HOW YOU COULD FAIL TO PENETRATE CUSTOMS.

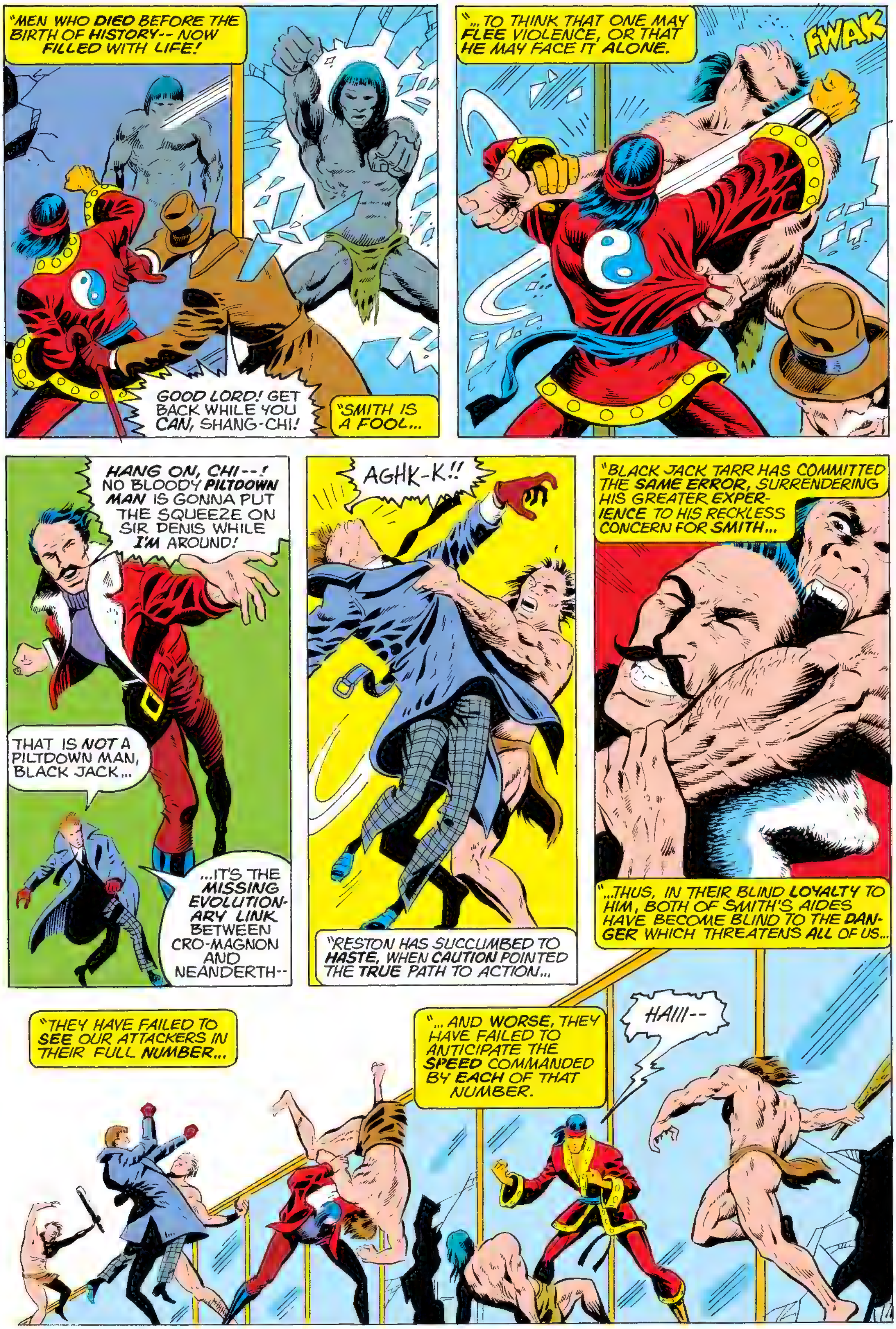

IT'S DONE ALL THE TIME -- BY US...
...AND THEM.

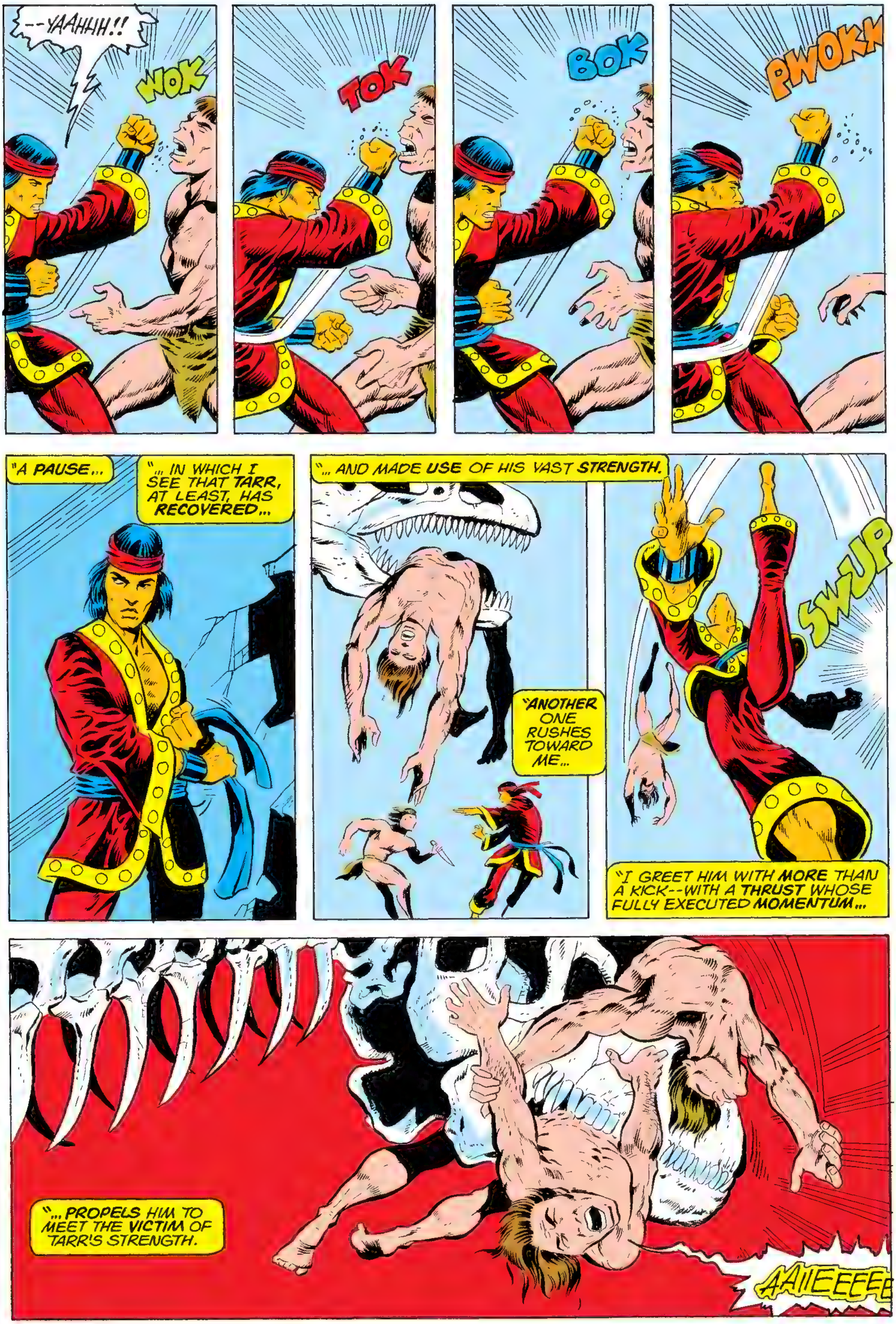

"THE BRITISH MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY: IN ITSELF, A STATELY TESTAMENT TO THE CULTURAL PAST...
"... AS WELL AS AN ARCHITECTURALLY REVERED STOREHOUSE FOR THE TREASURES OF ANTIQUITY...
"... MANY OF WHICH HAVE BEEN DESTROYED LESS THAN FIVE HOURS AGO.
YES--IT'S CONSISTENT THAT THEY SHOULD STRIKE HERE. THEY'D BE RIGHT AT HOME IN THIS ORIENTALOGY HALL.
AND THIS ISN'T THE FIRST SUCH INCIDENT, CLIVE. EACH PREVIOUS OCCURRENCE HAS LEFT THE SAME LEGACY-- MUCH DESTROYED BUT NOTHING TAKEN.
ALL WE MAY DEDUCE IS THAT THE PHANSIGARS WANT SOMETHING, AND HAVE YET TO FIND IT.
SIR DENIS... HOW DO YOU KNOW IT WAS THE PHANSIGARS?
THREE MUSEUM GUARDS WERE STRANGLED, SHANG-CHI--GARROTTED...
EACH OF THE CORPSES WORE ONE OF THESE AROUND ITS NECK.
COME ALONG-- WE MAY AS WELL RETURN TO SCOTLAND YARD...
NOTHING MORE WE CAN DO HERE.
"WE LEAVE THE ORIENTALOGY EXHIBIT...

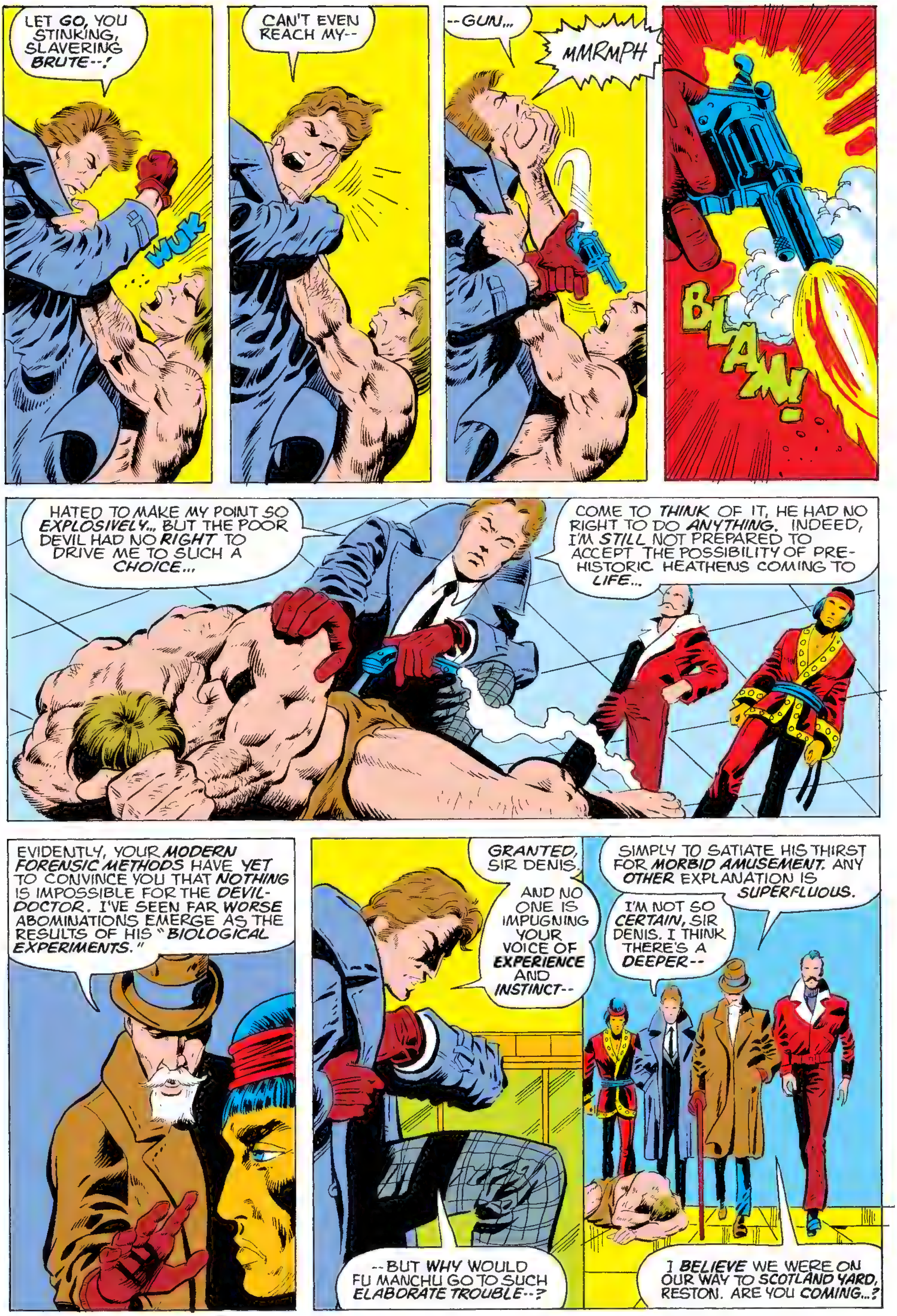

"... AND PASS THROUGH OTHER SECTIONS OF THIS VAST MUSEUM...
THESE DINOSAURS CERTAINLY WERE BIG GEEZERS, EH, CHI?
YES... IN STATURE.
I'VE BEEN THINKING, SIR DENIS...
...WHY WOULD THE PHANSIGARS ADVERTISE THEIR WORK BY LEAVING ALL THOSE AMULETS ABOUT?
THE TYPICAL BEHAVIOR OF FANATICS -- SUPREME PRIDE IN THEIR CULT.
I'M INCLINED TO DISAGREE, SIR. FU MANCHU WANTS SOMETHING, TO BE SURE -- BUT IT'S NOT THE OBVIOUS.
I HYPOTHESIZE THAT THESE PHANSIGAR INCIDENTS ARE MERE DIVERSIONS, DESIGNED TO STEER US AWAY FROM FU'S REAL GAMBIT.
DO YOU ACTUALLY THINK I HAVEN'T ALREADY CONSIDERED THAT, RESTON? I'M FULLY AWARE OF FU MANCHU'S PROCLIVITY FOR THE DEVIOUS -- AND I SAY HE DOESN'T CARE A WHIT WHETHER WE KNOW WHAT HE'S AFTER OR NOT--!
HE'S CONVINCED HE'LL GET IT EITHER WAY -- AND HE MAY BE RIGHT IN HIS ARROGANCE. ALL WE CAN DO IS OUR BEST -- NAMELY, PURSUE EVERY PHANSIGAR CLUE TO ITS CONCLUSION.
AND I SAY IT'S THE BIGGEST MISTAKE WE COULD MAKE! WE MUST IGNORE THE PHANSIGAR HARASSMENT AS DELIBERATE DIVERSION --
-- AND CONCENTRATE INSTEAD ON A FULLY-MOUNTED SEARCH FOR FU MANCHU HIMSELF.


IMPOSSIBLE--!
HAVE YOU EVER *TRIED* IT?
YOU MAY STAKE YOUR ENTIRE *INEXPERIENCED CAREER* ON THE FACT THAT I'VE TRIED IT--FOR MORE THAN *FORTY YEARS* OF *HORROR* AND *ARTROCITY!*
THEN I SAY YOUR INCESSANT *FAILURE* ONLY DEMONSTRATES THE NEED FOR *NEW METHODS!*
AND *I* SAY YOU'RE WORKING *UNDER* SIR DENIS--NOT *OVER* HIM.
SO YOU'LL JUST KEEP YOUR *MODERN CRIMINAL PSYCHOLOGY* TO *YOURSELF*--AND FOLLOW *ORDERS*.
VERY...
...WELL.
"BLACK JACK TARR HAS *INTIMIDATED* THE YOUNG AGENT, PROVIDING THE SILENCE FOR A *QUESTION*...
IF EVIDENCE OF PHANSIGAR ACTIVITY HAS BEEN DETECTED IN BOTH NEW YORK *AND* LONDON...THEN, SIR DENIS, WHY ARE YOU CONVINCED MY FATHER IS HERE IN *LONDON* RATHER THAN *NEW YORK*...?
"A *DIFFERENT* MANNER OF SILENCE...
"AND--
BECAUSE A SCRAP OF *PAPER* WAS FOUND BY A LONDON *POLICEMAN*, SHANG-CHI...
THREE SMALL *WORDS* WERE SCRAWLED ON THAT PAPER...
THE WORDS WERE: *"I AM ALIVE."*
AND IT WAS SIGNED... *PETRIE*.


"MY MIND FILLS WITH A VISION WHICH *DISPROVES* SMITH'S WORDS, FOR MORE THAN A *YEAR* HAS PASSED SINCE MY FATHER *DECEIVED* ME INTO THE ACT OF--
"--*SLAYING* DR. PETRIE.
YES, I *KNOW*, LAD. IT'S *IMPOSSIBLE*, AND YET--
"--?!!
KREESH

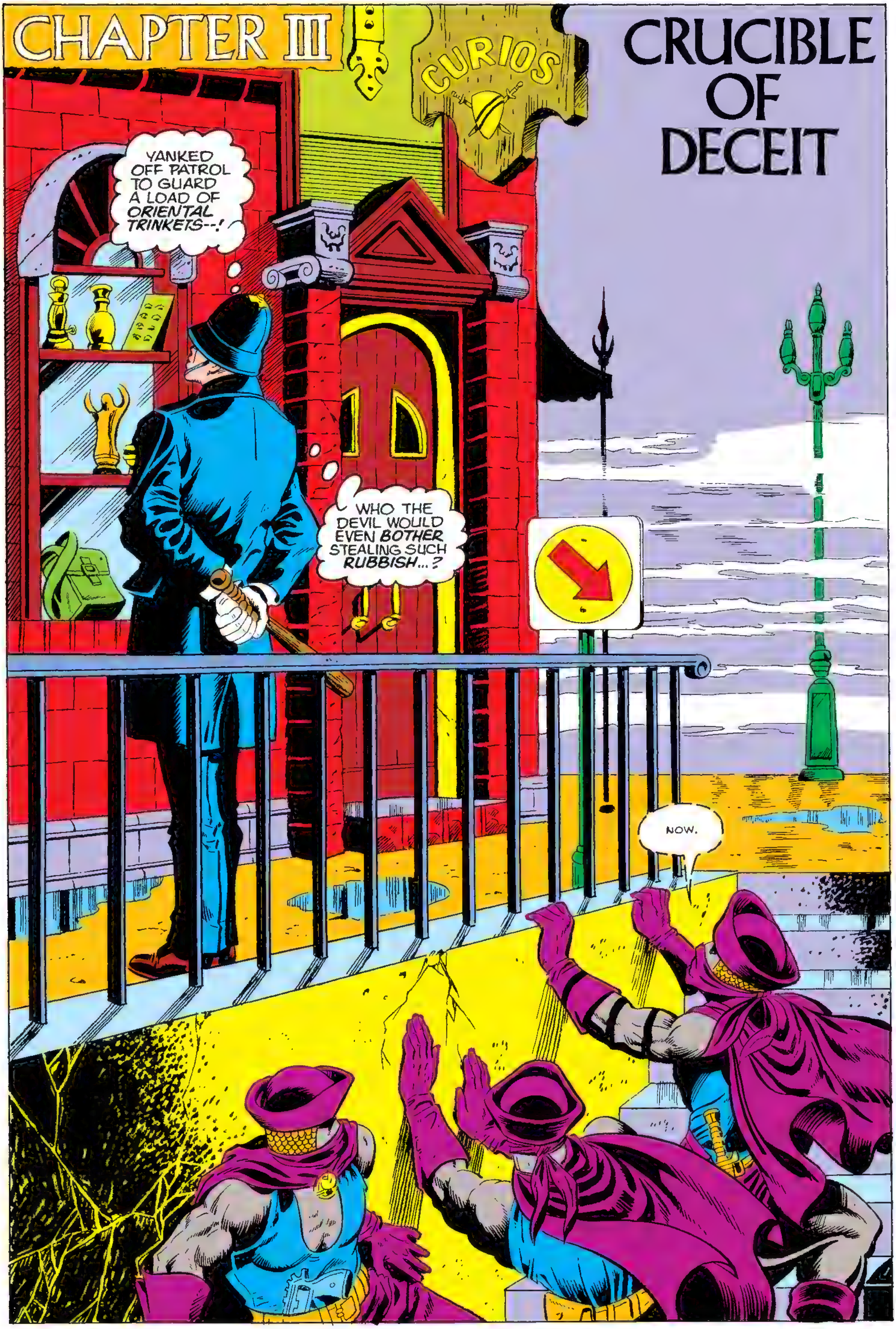

"MEN WHO DIED BEFORE THE BIRTH OF HISTORY-- NOW FILLED WITH LIFE!
GOOD LORD! GET BACK WHILE YOU CAN, SHANG-CHI!
"SMITH IS A FOOL...
"...TO THINK THAT ONE MAY FLEE VIOLENCE, OR THAT HE MAY FACE IT ALONE.
FWAK
HANG ON, CHI--! NO BLOODY PILTDOWN MAN IS GONNA PUT THE SQUEEZE ON SIR DENIS WHILE I'M AROUND!
THAT IS NOT A PILTDOWN MAN, BLACK JACK...
...IT'S THE MISSING EVOLUTIONARY LINK BETWEEN CRO-MAGNON AND NEANDERTH--
AGHK-K!!
"RESTON HAS SUCCUMBED TO HASTE, WHEN CAUTION POINTED THE TRUE PATH TO ACTION...
"BLACK JACK TARR HAS COMMITTED THE SAME ERROR, SURRENDERING HIS GREATER EXPERIENCE TO HIS RECKLESS CONCERN FOR SMITH...
"...THUS, IN THEIR BLIND LOYALTY TO HIM, BOTH OF SMITH'S AIDES HAVE BECOME BLIND TO THE DANGER WHICH THREATENS ALL OF US...
"THEY HAVE FAILED TO SEE OUR ATTACKERS IN THEIR FULL NUMBER...
"... AND WORSE, THEY HAVE FAILED TO ANTICIPATE THE SPEED COMMANDED BY EACH OF THAT NUMBER.
HAIII--

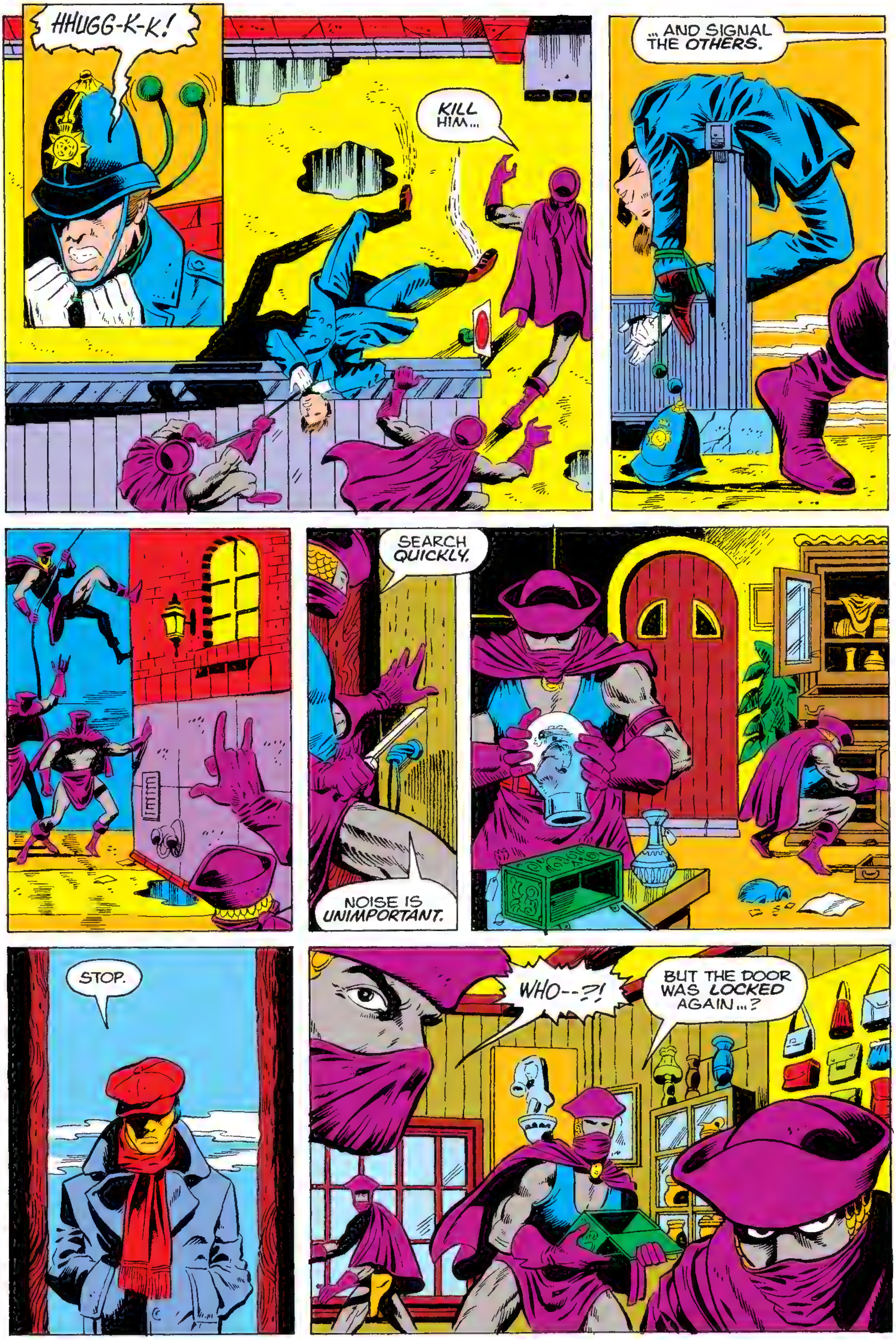

--YAAHHH!!
WOK
TOK
BOK
PWOKK
"A PAUSE...
"... IN WHICH I SEE THAT TARR, AT LEAST, HAS RECOVERED...
"... AND MADE USE OF HIS VAST STRENGTH.
"ANOTHER ONE RUSHES TOWARD ME...
SWUP
"I GREET HIM WITH MORE THAN A KICK--WITH A THRUST WHOSE FULLY EXECUTED MOMENTUM...
"... PROPELS HIM TO MEET THE VICTIM OF TARR'S STRENGTH.
AAIIEEEEE

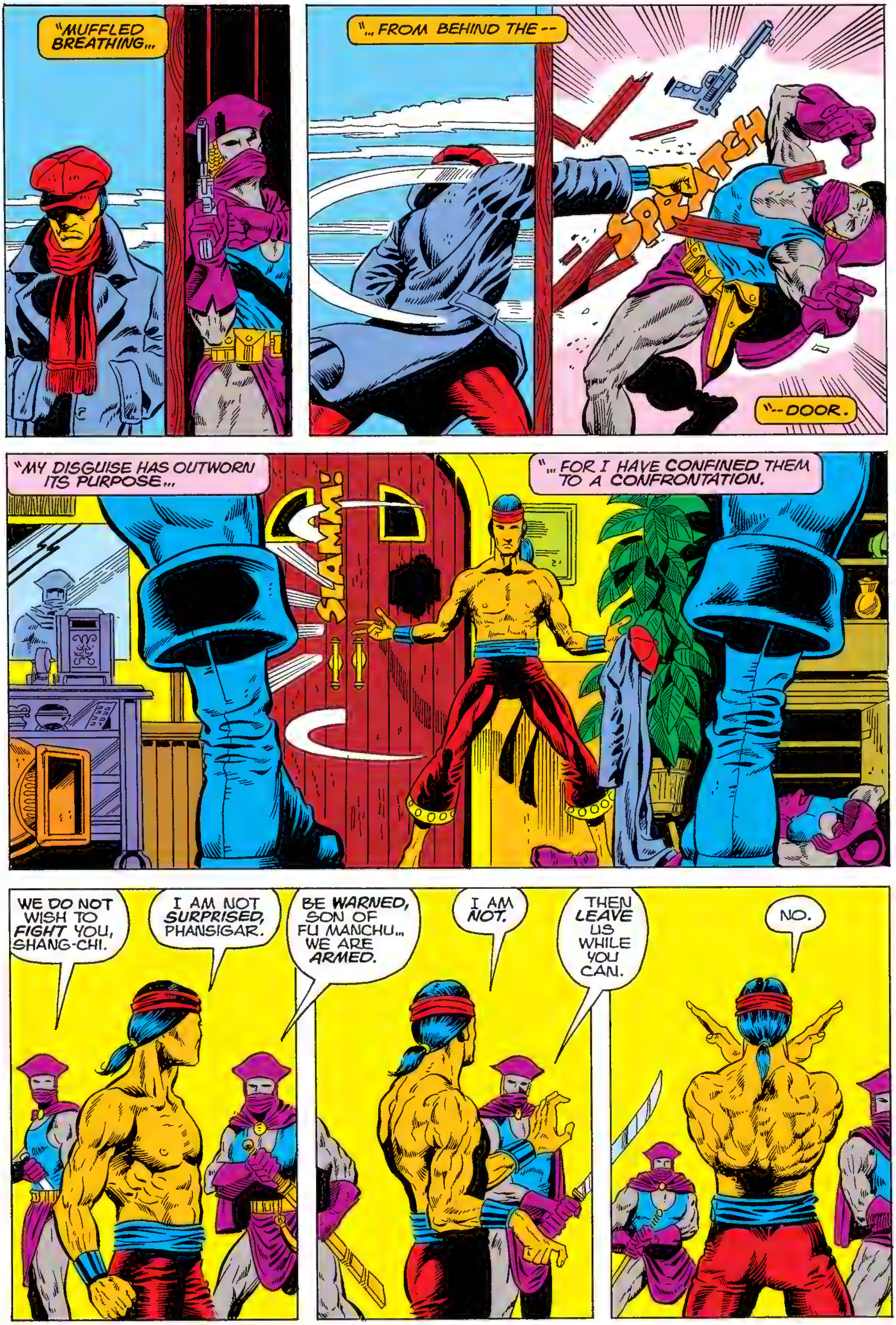

LET *GO*, YOU STINKING, SLAVERING *BRUTE*--!
WUK
CAN'T EVEN REACH MY--
--GUN...
MMRMPH
BLAM!
HATED TO MAKE MY POINT SO *EXPLOSIVELY*... BUT THE POOR DEVIL HAD NO *RIGHT* TO DRIVE ME TO SUCH A *CHOICE*...
COME TO *THINK* OF IT, HE HAD NO RIGHT TO DO *ANYTHING*. INDEED, I'M *STILL* NOT PREPARED TO ACCEPT THE POSSIBILITY OF PRE-HISTORIC HEATHENS COMING TO *LIFE*...
EVIDENTLY, YOUR *MODERN FORENSIC METHODS* HAVE *YET* TO CONVINCE YOU THAT *NOTHING* IS IMPOSSIBLE FOR THE *DEVIL-DOCTOR*. I'VE SEEN FAR *WORSE* ABOMINATIONS EMERGE AS THE RESULTS OF HIS "*BIOLOGICAL EXPERIMENTS*."
GRANTED, SIR DENIS.
AND NO ONE IS IMPUGNING YOUR VOICE OF ***EXPERIENCE*** AND *INSTINCT*--
--BUT *WHY* WOULD FU MANCHU GO TO SUCH *ELABORATE TROUBLE*--?
SIMPLY TO SATIATE HIS THIRST FOR *MORBID AMUSEMENT*. ANY *OTHER* EXPLANATION IS *SUPERFLUOUS*.
I'M NOT SO *CERTAIN*, SIR DENIS. I THINK THERE'S A *DEEPER*--
I *BELIEVE* WE WERE ON OUR WAY TO *SCOTLAND YARD*, RESTON. ARE YOU *COMING*...?

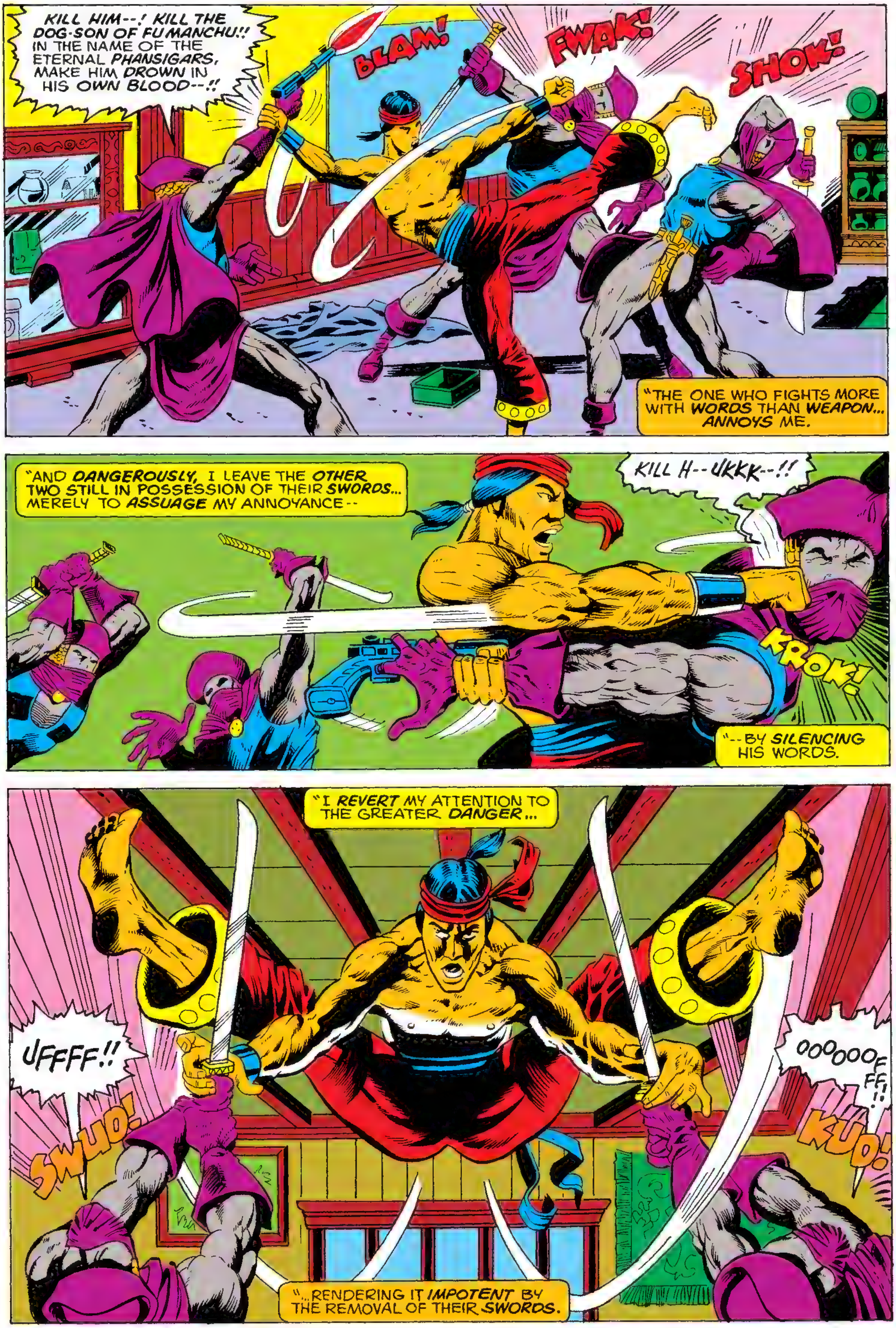
CHAPTER III

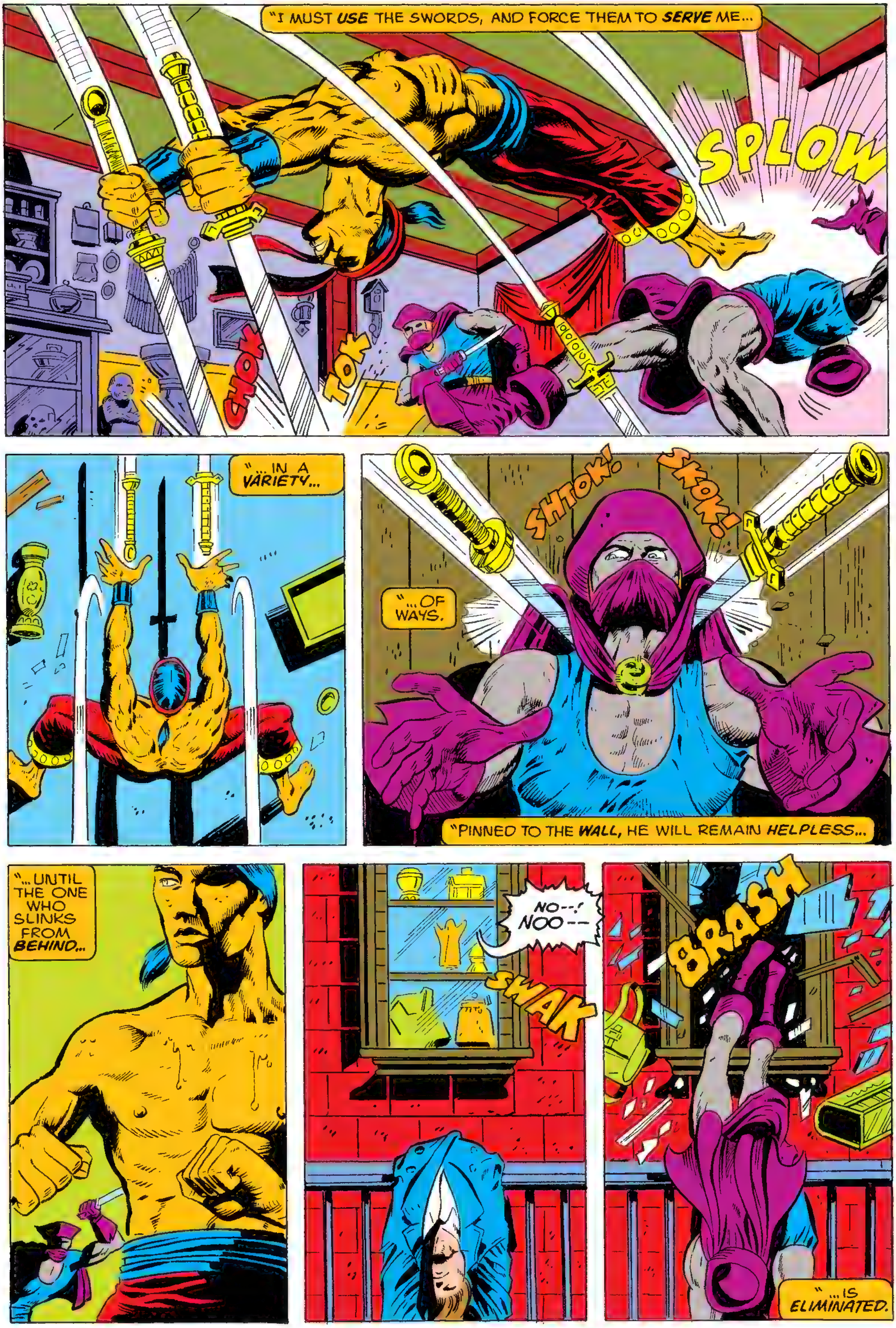
CRUCIBLE OF DECEIT

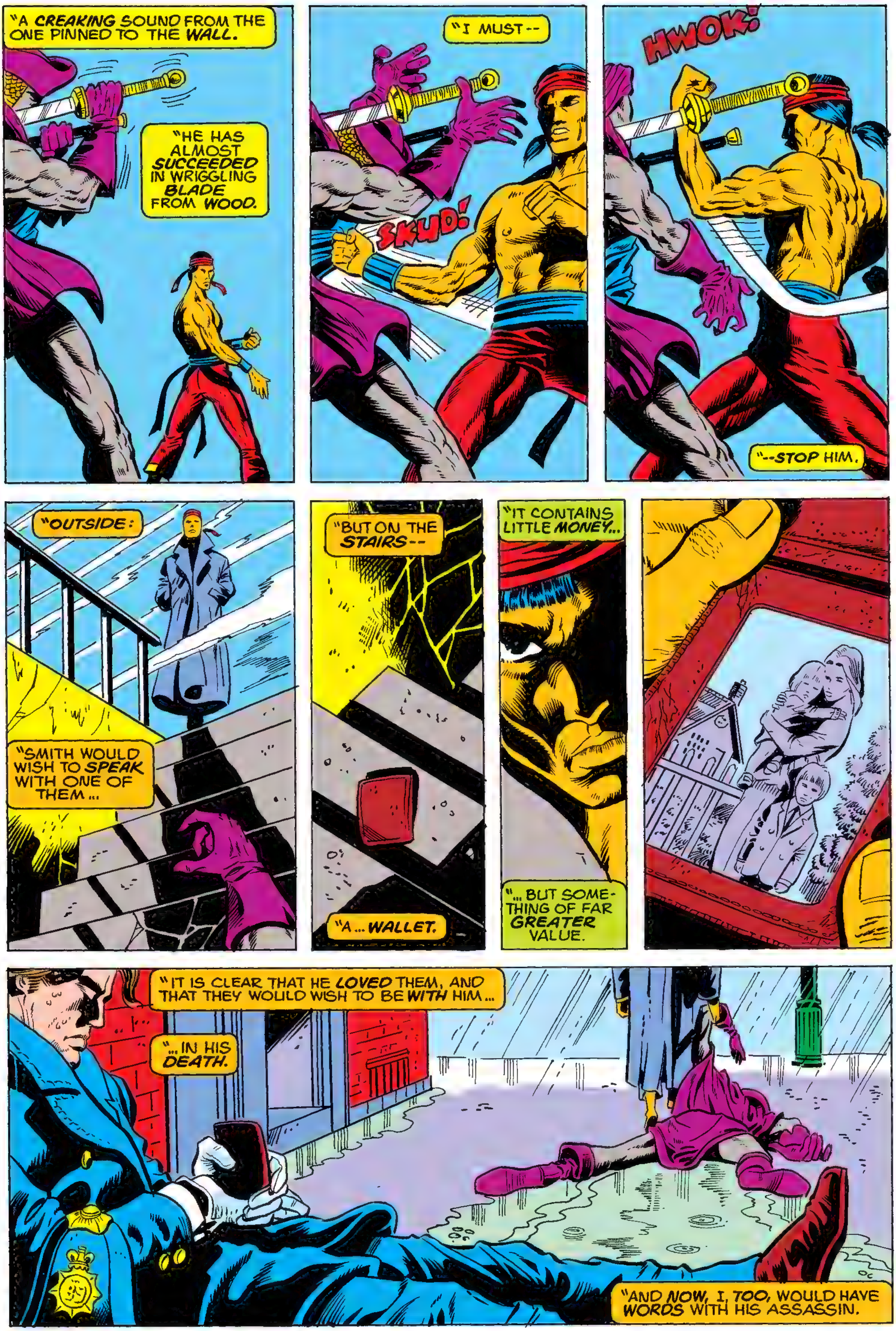

CURIOS
YANKED OFF PATROL TO GUARD A LOAD OF *ORIENTAL TRINKETS*--!
WHO THE DEVIL WOULD EVEN *BOTHER* STEALING SUCH *RUBBISH*...?
NOW.


HHUGG-K-K!
KILL HIM...
... AND SIGNAL THE OTHERS.
SEARCH QUICKLY.
NOISE IS UNIMPORTANT.
STOP.
WHO--?!
BUT THE DOOR WAS LOCKED AGAIN...?

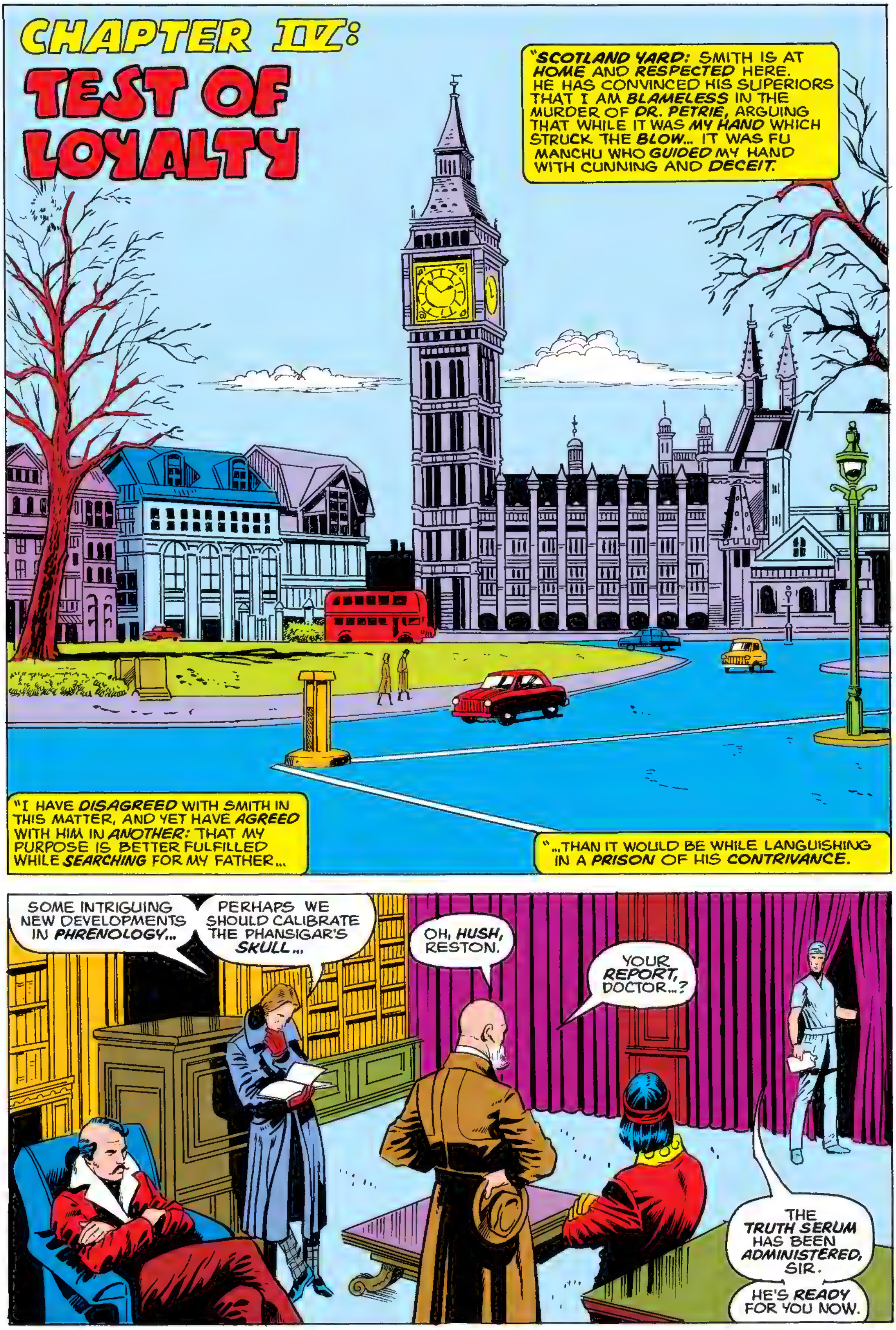

"MUFFLED BREATHING...
"... FROM BEHIND THE --
SPRATCH
"-- DOOR.
"MY DISGUISE HAS OUTWORN ITS PURPOSE...
SLAMM!
"... FOR I HAVE CONFINED THEM TO A CONFRONTATION.
WE DO NOT WISH TO FIGHT YOU, SHANG-CHI.
I AM NOT SURPRISED, PHANSIGAR.
BE WARNED, SON OF FU MANCHU... WE ARE ARMED.
I AM NOT.
THEN LEAVE US WHILE YOU CAN.
NO.

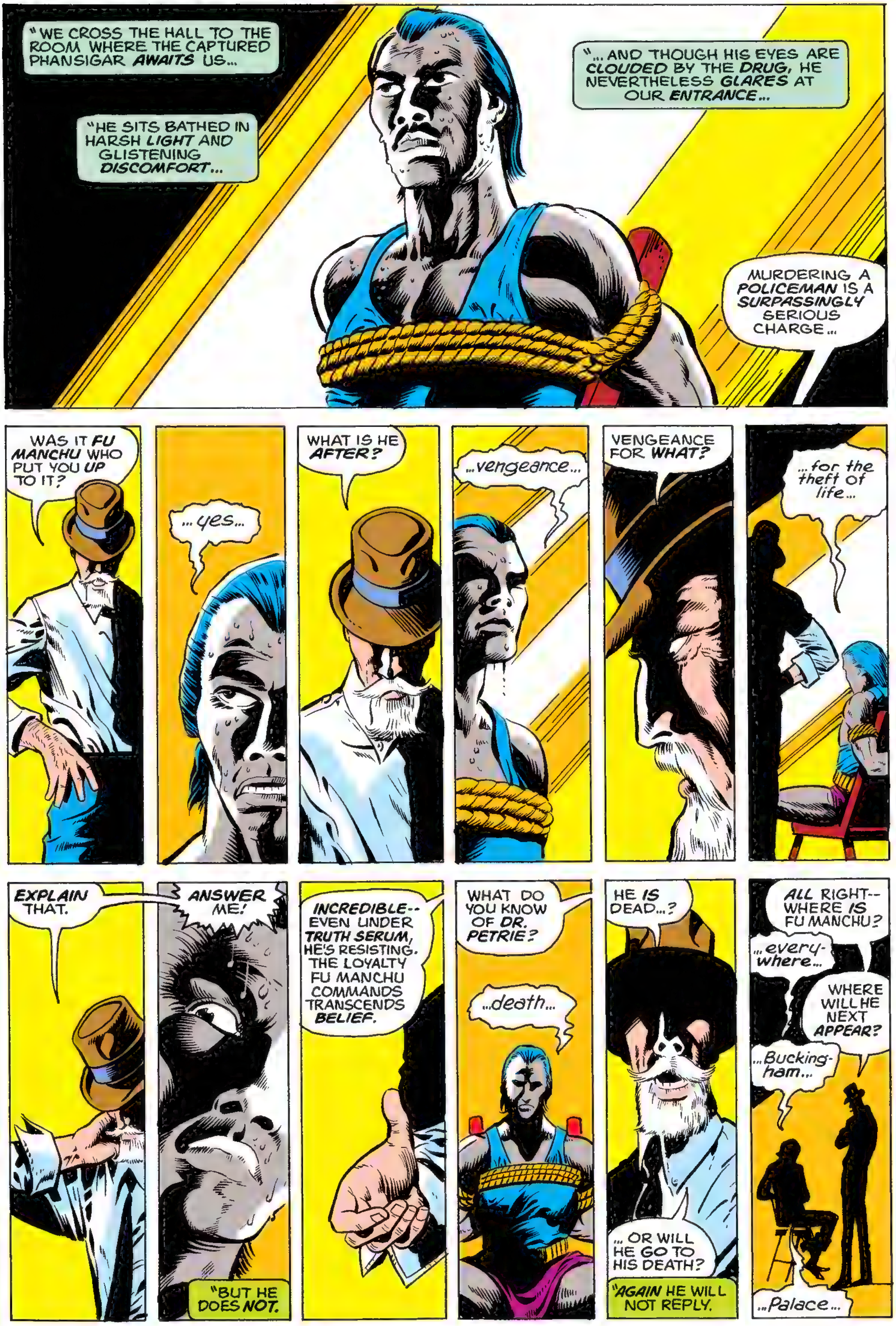

KILL HIM--! KILL THE DOG-SON OF FU MANCHU!! IN THE NAME OF THE ETERNAL PHANSIGARS, MAKE HIM DROWN IN HIS OWN BLOOD--!!
BLAM!
FWAK!
SHOK!
"THE ONE WHO FIGHTS MORE WITH WORDS THAN WEAPON... ANNOYS ME.
"AND DANGEROUSLY, I LEAVE THE OTHER TWO STILL IN POSSESSION OF THEIR SWORDS... MERELY TO ASSUAGE MY ANNOYANCE--
KILL H--UKKK--!!
KROK!
"--BY SILENCING HIS WORDS.
"I REVERT MY ATTENTION TO THE GREATER DANGER...
UFFFF!!
SWUD!
OOOOOOFFF!!
KUD!
"...RENDERING IT IMPOTENT BY THE REMOVAL OF THEIR SWORDS.

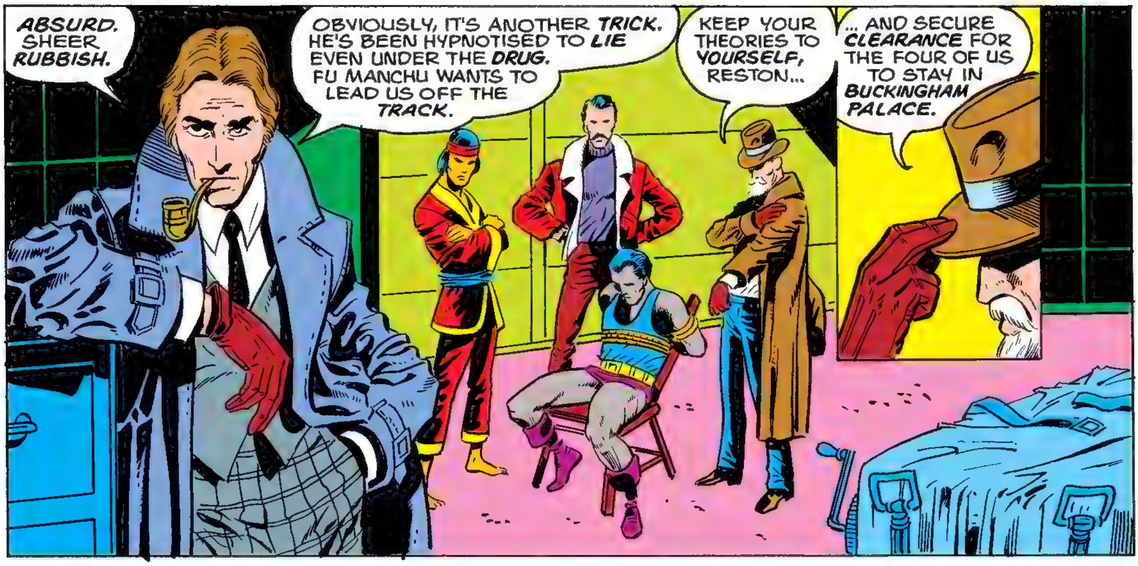

"I MUST USE THE SWORDS, AND FORCE THEM TO SERVE ME...
SPLOW
CHOK
TOK
"...IN A VARIETY...
SHTOK!
SKOK!
"...OF WAYS.
"PINNED TO THE WALL, HE WILL REMAIN HELPLESS...
"...UNTIL THE ONE WHO SLINKS FROM BEHIND...
NO--! NOO--
SWAK
BRASH
"...IS ELIMINATED.

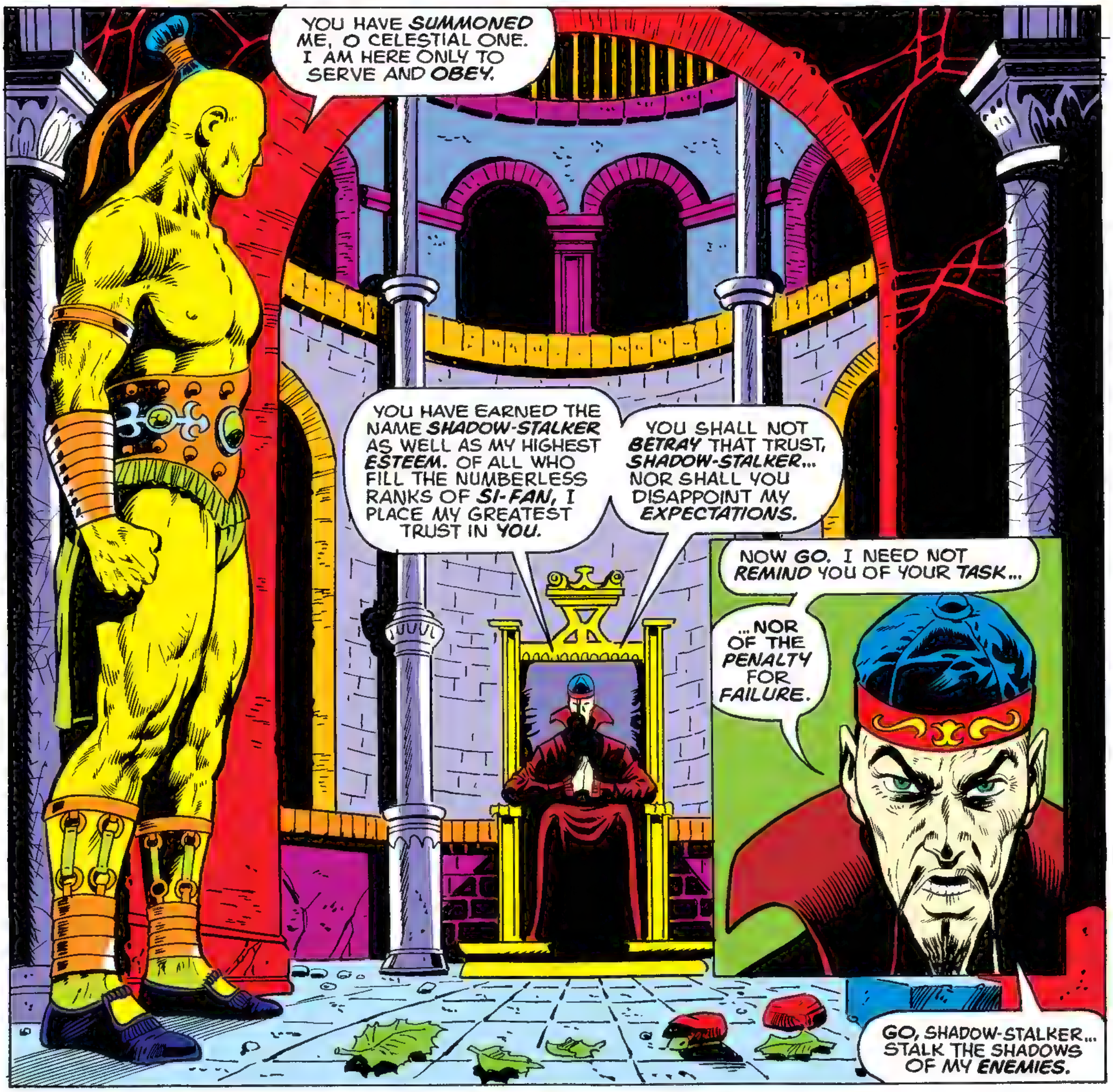

"A CREAKING SOUND FROM THE ONE PINNED TO THE WALL.
"HE HAS ALMOST SUCCEEDED IN WRIGGLING BLADE FROM WOOD.
"I MUST--
SKUD!
HWOK!
"--STOP HIM.
"OUTSIDE:
"SMITH WOULD WISH TO SPEAK WITH ONE OF THEM...
"BUT ON THE STAIRS--
"A... WALLET.
"IT CONTAINS LITTLE MONEY...
"... BUT SOMETHING OF FAR GREATER VALUE.
"IT IS CLEAR THAT HE LOVED THEM, AND THAT THEY WOULD WISH TO BE WITH HIM...
"... IN HIS DEATH.
"AND NOW, I, TOO, WOULD HAVE WORDS WITH HIS ASSASSIN.

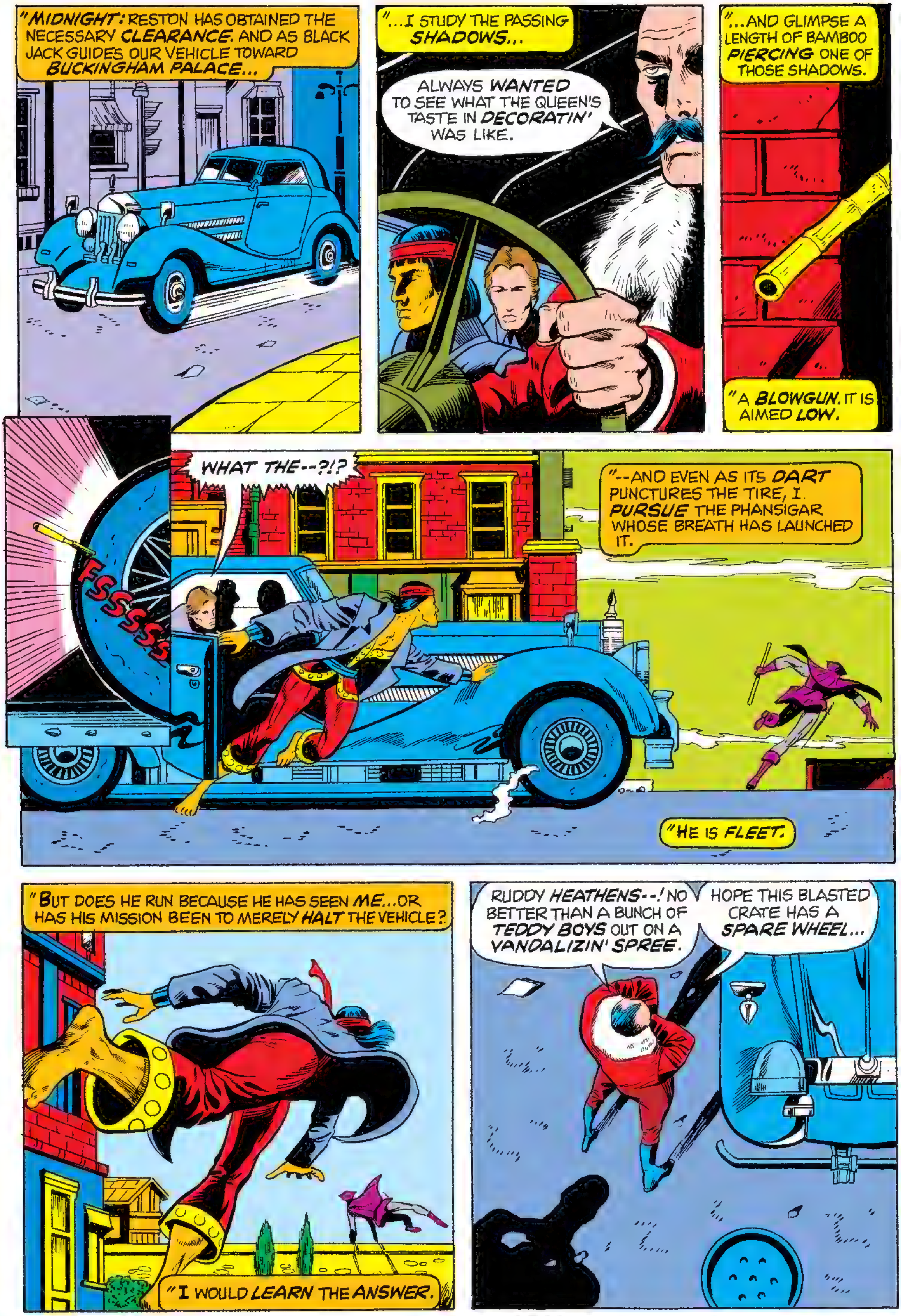
CHAPTER IV: TEST OF LOYALTY

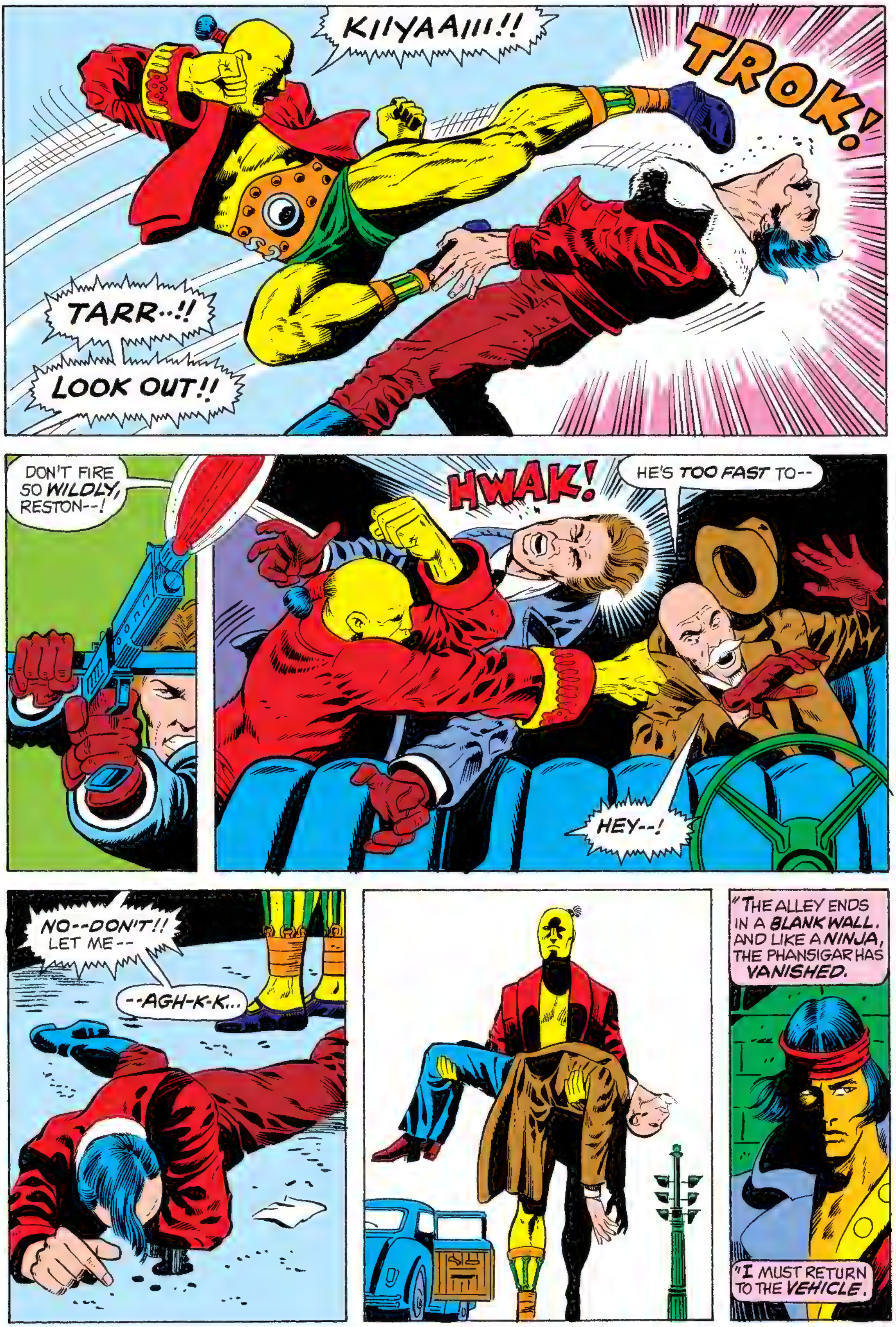

CHAPTER IV:
TEST OF LOYALTY
"SCOTLAND YARD: SMITH IS AT HOME AND RESPECTED HERE. HE HAS CONVINCED HIS SUPERIORS THAT I AM BLAMELESS IN THE MURDER OF DR. PETRIE, ARGUING THAT WHILE IT WAS MY HAND WHICH STRUCK THE BLOW... IT WAS FU MANCHU WHO GUIDED MY HAND WITH CUNNING AND DECEIT.
"I HAVE DISAGREED WITH SMITH IN THIS MATTER, AND YET HAVE AGREED WITH HIM IN ANOTHER: THAT MY PURPOSE IS BETTER FULFILLED WHILE SEARCHING FOR MY FATHER...
"...THAN IT WOULD BE WHILE LANGUISHING IN A PRISON OF HIS CONTRIVANCE.
SOME INTRIGUING NEW DEVELOPMENTS IN PHRENOLOGY...
PERHAPS WE SHOULD CALIBRATE THE PHANSIGAR'S SKULL...
OH, HUSH, RESTON.
YOUR REPORT, DOCTOR...?
THE TRUTH SERUM HAS BEEN ADMINISTERED, SIR.
HE'S READY FOR YOU NOW.

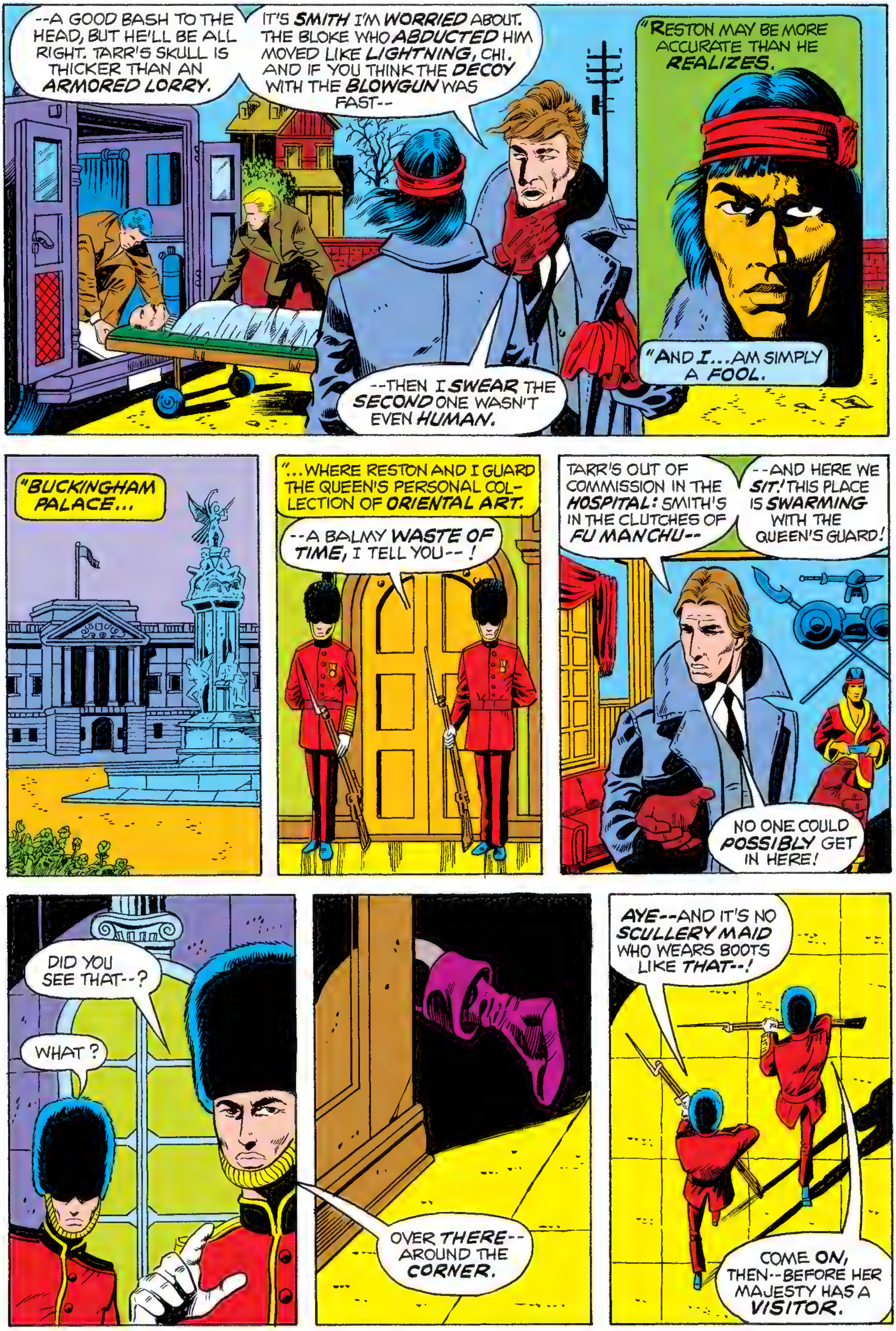

"WE CROSS THE HALL TO THE ROOM WHERE THE CAPTURED PHANSIGAR *AWAITS* US...
"HE SITS BATHED IN HARSH *LIGHT* AND GLISTENING *DISCOMFORT*...
"... AND THOUGH HIS EYES ARE *CLOUDED* BY THE *DRUG,* HE NEVERTHELESS *GLARES* AT OUR *ENTRANCE*...
MURDERING A *POLICEMAN* IS A *SURPASSINGLY* SERIOUS CHARGE...
WAS IT *FU MANCHU* WHO PUT YOU *UP* TO IT?
...yes...
WHAT IS HE *AFTER?*
...vengeance...
VENGEANCE FOR *WHAT?*
...for the theft of life...
EXPLAIN THAT.
ANSWER ME!
"BUT HE DOES *NOT.*
INCREDIBLE-- EVEN UNDER *TRUTH SERUM,* HE'S RESISTING. THE LOYALTY FU MANCHU COMMANDS TRANSCENDS *BELIEF.*
WHAT DO YOU KNOW OF *DR. PETRIE?*
...death...
HE *IS* DEAD...?
... OR WILL HE GO TO HIS DEATH?
"*AGAIN* HE WILL NOT REPLY.
ALL RIGHT-- WHERE *IS* FU MANCHU?
...every-where...
WHERE WILL HE NEXT *APPEAR?*
...Bucking-ham...
...Palace...

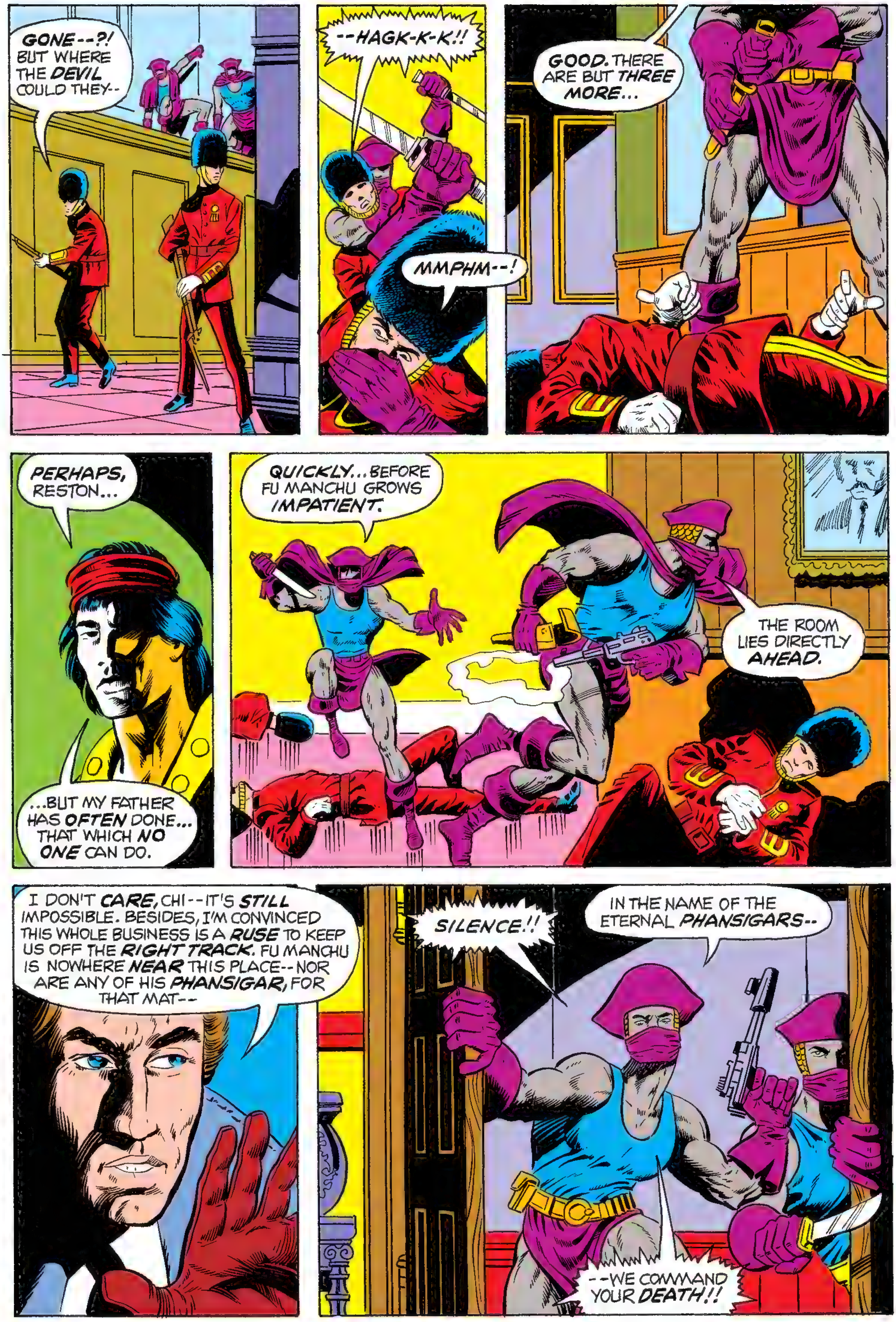

ABSURD. SHEER RUBBISH.
OBVIOUSLY, IT'S ANOTHER TRICK. HE'S BEEN HYPNOTISED TO LIE EVEN UNDER THE DRUG. FU MANCHU WANTS TO LEAD US OFF THE TRACK.
KEEP YOUR THEORIES TO YOURSELF, RESTON...
... AND SECURE CLEARANCE FOR THE FOUR OF US TO STAY IN BUCKINGHAM PALACE.

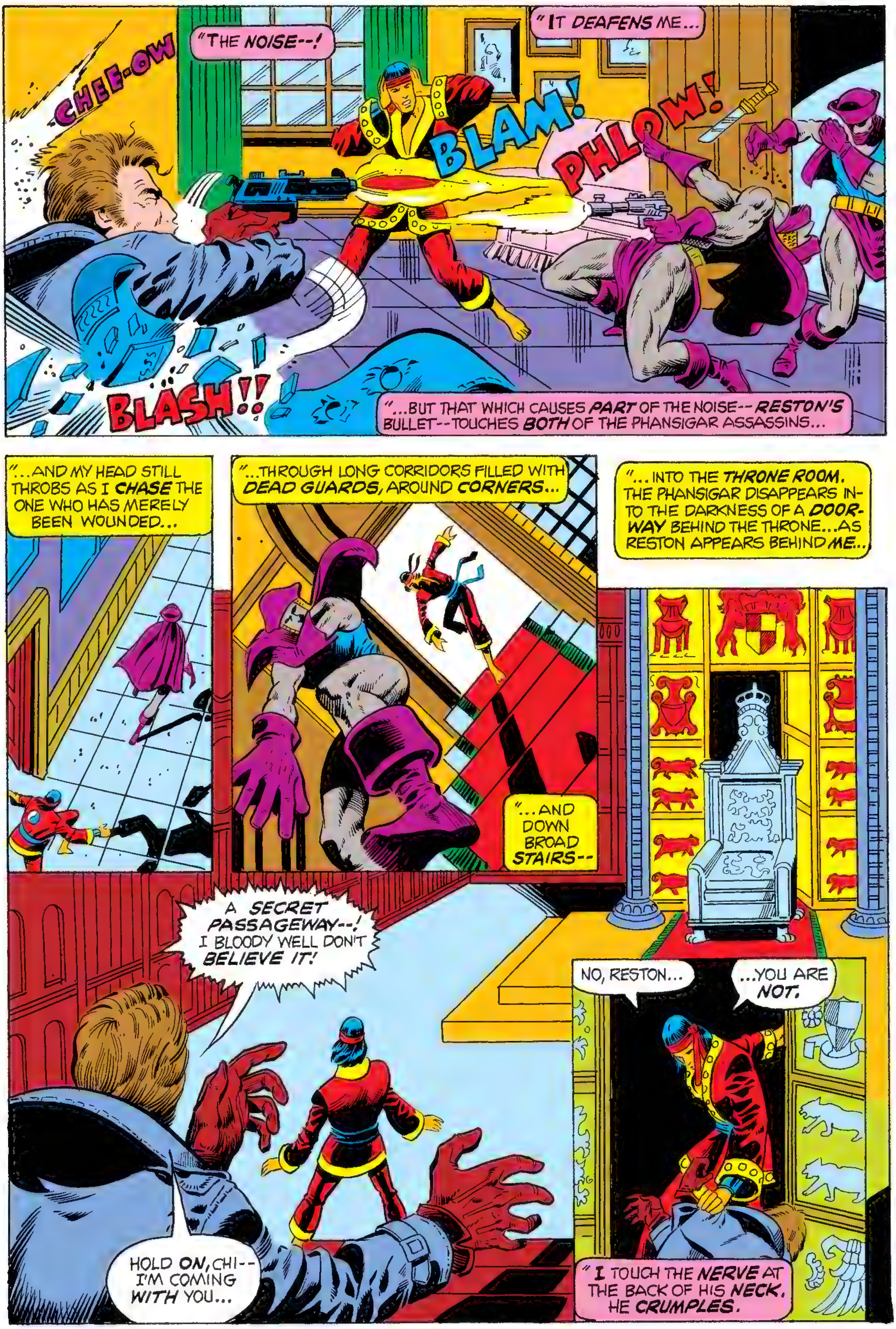

YOU HAVE SUMMONED ME, O CELESTIAL ONE. I AM HERE ONLY TO SERVE AND OBEY.
YOU HAVE EARNED THE NAME SHADOW-STALKER AS WELL AS MY HIGHEST ESTEEM. OF ALL WHO FILL THE NUMBERLESS RANKS OF SI-FAN, I PLACE MY GREATEST TRUST IN YOU.
YOU SHALL NOT BETRAY THAT TRUST, SHADOW-STALKER... NOR SHALL YOU DISAPPOINT MY EXPECTATIONS.
NOW GO. I NEED NOT REMIND YOU OF YOUR TASK...
...NOR OF THE PENALTY FOR FAILURE.
GO, SHADOW-STALKER... STALK THE SHADOWS OF MY ENEMIES.

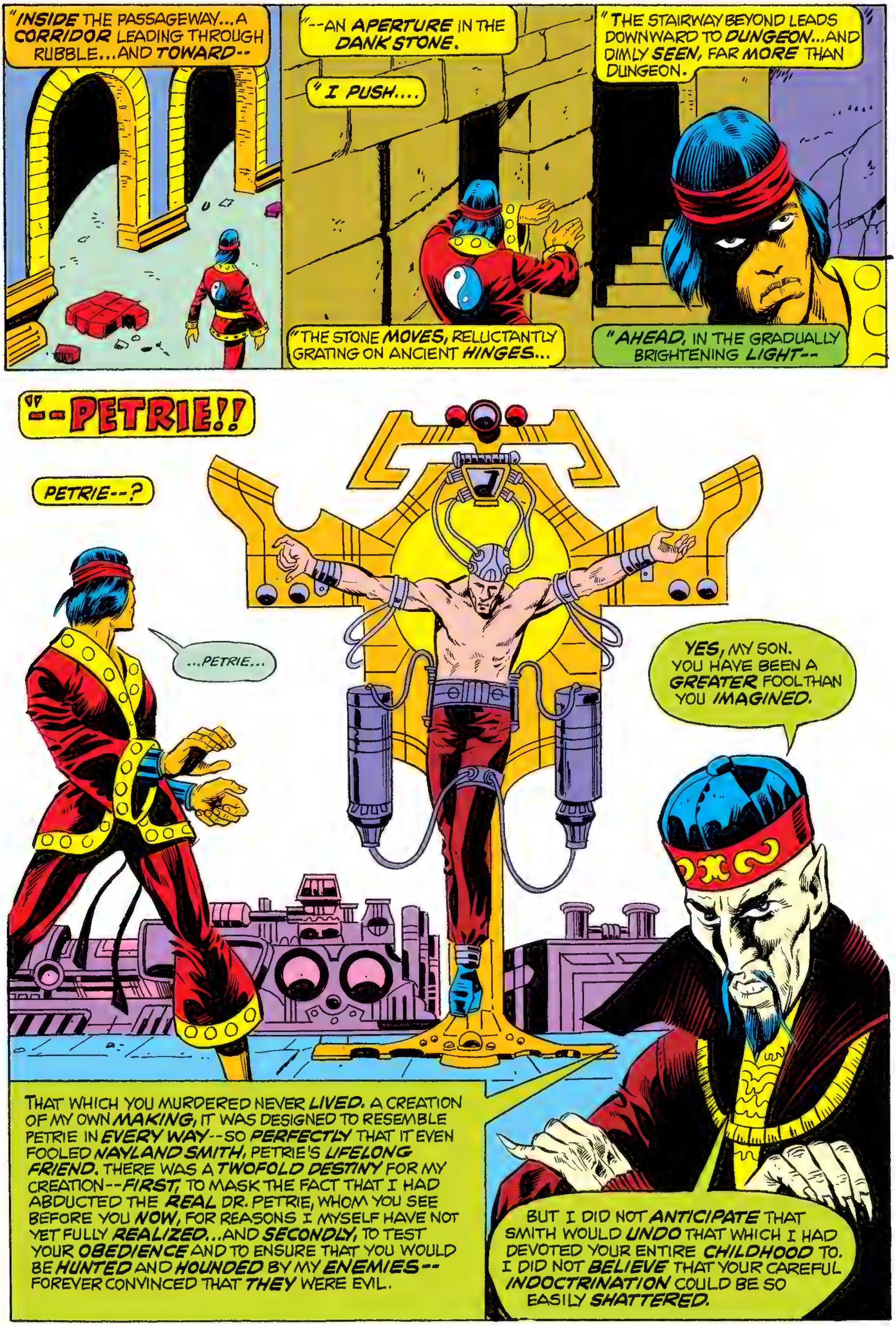

"MIDNIGHT: RESTON HAS OBTAINED THE NECESSARY CLEARANCE. AND AS BLACK JACK GUIDES OUR VEHICLE TOWARD BUCKINGHAM PALACE...
"...I STUDY THE PASSING SHADOWS...
ALWAYS WANTED TO SEE WHAT THE QUEEN'S TASTE IN DECORATIN' WAS LIKE.
"...AND GLIMPSE A LENGTH OF BAMBOO PIERCING ONE OF THOSE SHADOWS.
"A BLOWGUN. IT IS AIMED LOW.
WHAT THE--?!?
FSSSSSS
"--AND EVEN AS ITS DART PUNCTURES THE TIRE, I PURSUE THE PHANSIGAR WHOSE BREATH HAS LAUNCHED IT.
"HE IS FLEET.
"BUT DOES HE RUN BECAUSE HE HAS SEEN ME...OR HAS HIS MISSION BEEN TO MERELY HALT THE VEHICLE?
"I WOULD LEARN THE ANSWER.
RUDDY HEATHENS--! NO BETTER THAN A BUNCH OF TEDDY BOYS OUT ON A VANDALIZIN' SPREE.
HOPE THIS BLASTED CRATE HAS A SPARE WHEEL...

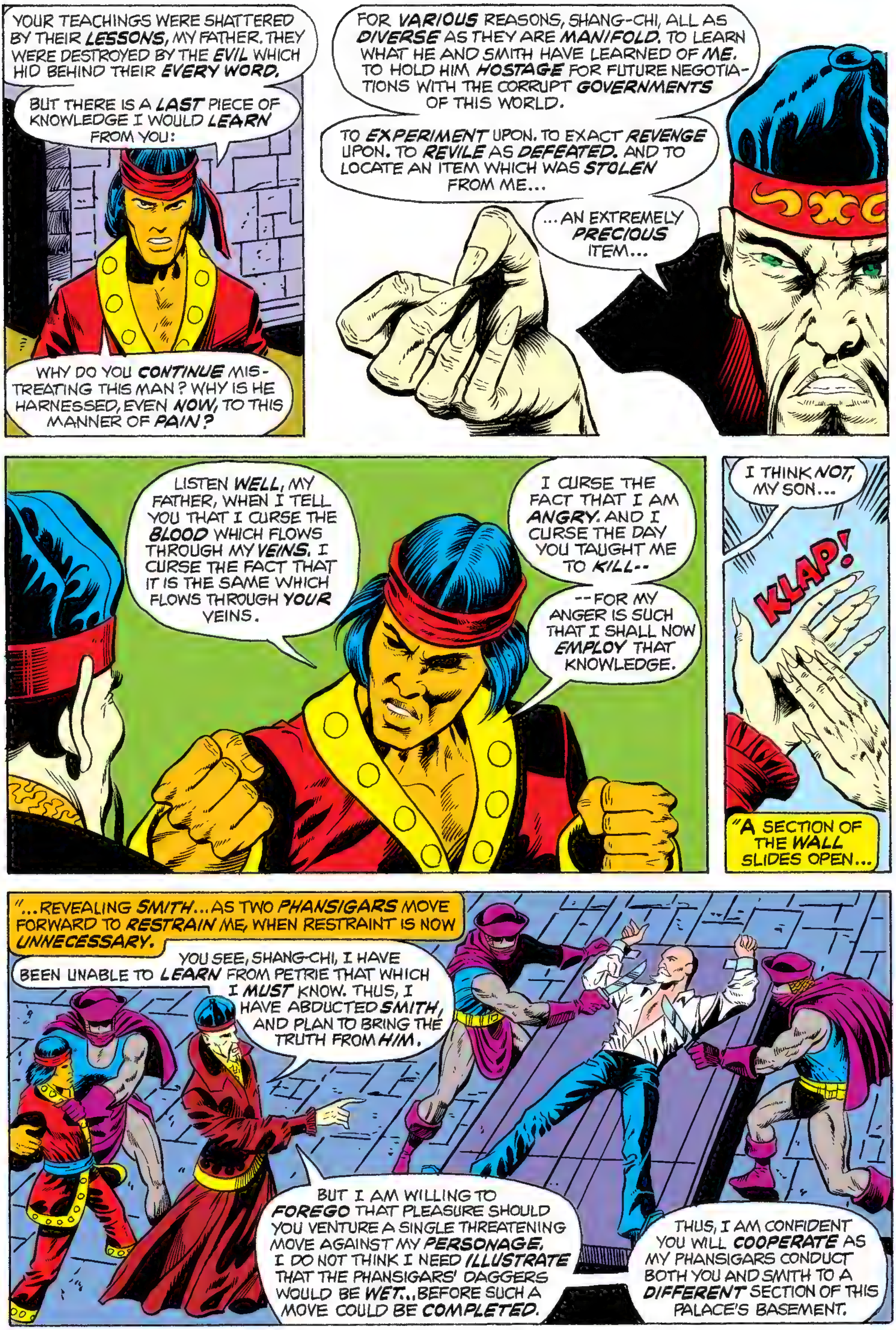

KIIYAAIII!!
TROK!
TARR..!!
LOOK OUT!!
DON'T FIRE SO *WILDLY*, RESTON--!
HWAK!
HE'S *TOO FAST* TO--
HEY--!
NO--DON'T!! LET ME--
--AGH-K-K...
"THE ALLEY ENDS IN A *BLANK WALL*. AND LIKE A *NINJA*, THE PHANSIGAR HAS *VANISHED*.
"I MUST RETURN TO THE *VEHICLE*.

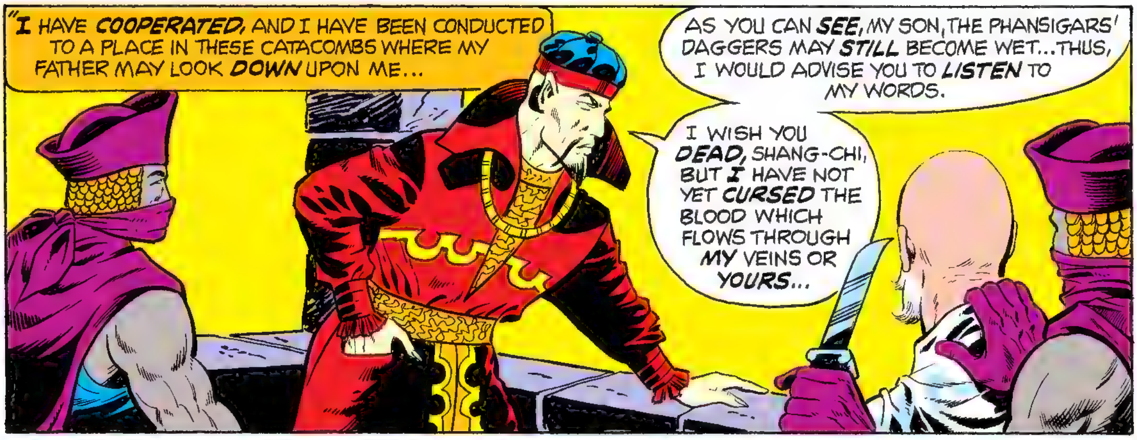

--A GOOD BASH TO THE HEAD, BUT HE'LL BE ALL RIGHT. TARR'S SKULL IS THICKER THAN AN ARMORED LORRY.
IT'S SMITH I'M WORRIED ABOUT. THE BLOKE WHO ABDUCTED HIM MOVED LIKE LIGHTNING, CHI. AND IF YOU THINK THE DECOY WITH THE BLOWGUN WAS FAST--
--THEN I SWEAR THE SECOND ONE WASN'T EVEN HUMAN.
"RESTON MAY BE MORE ACCURATE THAN HE REALIZES.
"AND I...AM SIMPLY A FOOL.
"BUCKINGHAM PALACE...
"...WHERE RESTON AND I GUARD THE QUEEN'S PERSONAL COLLECTION OF ORIENTAL ART.
--A BALMY WASTE OF TIME, I TELL YOU--!
TARR'S OUT OF COMMISSION IN THE HOSPITAL: SMITH'S IN THE CLUTCHES OF FU MANCHU--
--AND HERE WE SIT! THIS PLACE IS SWARMING WITH THE QUEEN'S GUARD!
NO ONE COULD POSSIBLY GET IN HERE!
DID YOU SEE THAT--?
WHAT?
OVER THERE-- AROUND THE CORNER.
AYE--AND IT'S NO SCULLERY MAID WHO WEARS BOOTS LIKE THAT--!
COME ON, THEN--BEFORE HER MAJESTY HAS A VISITOR.

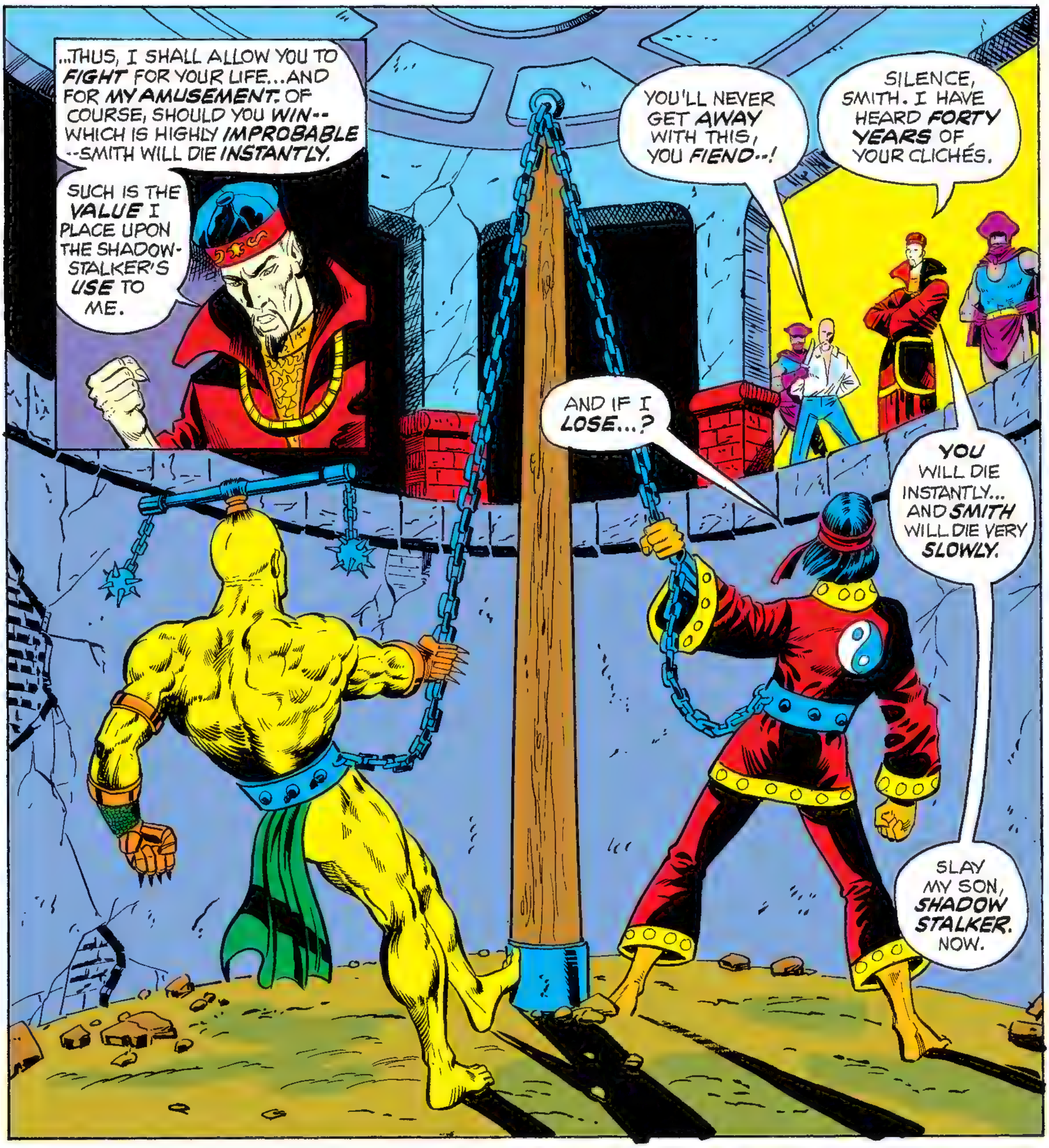

GONE--?! BUT WHERE THE DEVIL COULD THEY--
--HAGK-K-K!!
MMPHM--!
GOOD. THERE ARE BUT THREE MORE...
PERHAPS, RESTON...
...BUT MY FATHER HAS OFTEN DONE... THAT WHICH NO ONE CAN DO.
QUICKLY... BEFORE FU MANCHU GROWS IMPATIENT.
THE ROOM LIES DIRECTLY AHEAD.
I DON'T CARE, CHI--IT'S STILL IMPOSSIBLE. BESIDES, I'M CONVINCED THIS WHOLE BUSINESS IS A RUSE TO KEEP US OFF THE RIGHT TRACK. FU MANCHU IS NOWHERE NEAR THIS PLACE--NOR ARE ANY OF HIS PHANSIGAR, FOR THAT MAT--
SILENCE!!
IN THE NAME OF THE ETERNAL PHANSIGARS--
--WE COMMAND YOUR DEATH!!

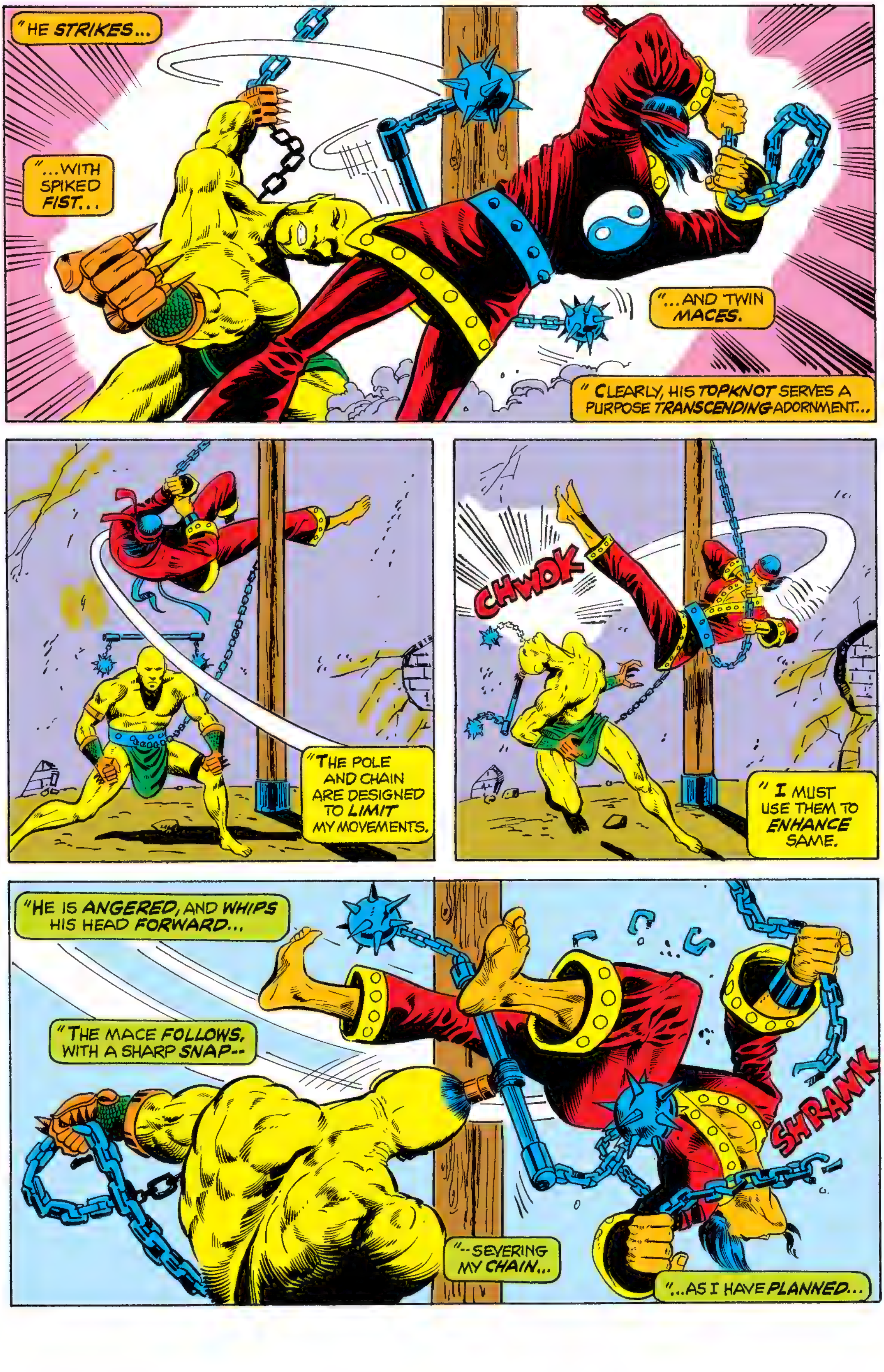

CHEE-OW
"THE NOISE--!
"IT DEAFENS ME...
BLAM!
PHLOW!
BLASH!!
"...BUT THAT WHICH CAUSES PART OF THE NOISE-- RESTON'S BULLET--TOUCHES BOTH OF THE PHANSIGAR ASSASSINS...
"...AND MY HEAD STILL THROBS AS I CHASE THE ONE WHO HAS MERELY BEEN WOUNDED...
"...THROUGH LONG CORRIDORS FILLED WITH DEAD GUARDS, AROUND CORNERS...
"...AND DOWN BROAD STAIRS--
"...INTO THE THRONE ROOM. THE PHANSIGAR DISAPPEARS INTO THE DARKNESS OF A DOORWAY BEHIND THE THRONE...AS RESTON APPEARS BEHIND ME...
A SECRET PASSAGEWAY--! I BLOODY WELL DON'T BELIEVE IT!
HOLD ON, CHI-- I'M COMING WITH YOU...
NO, RESTON...
...YOU ARE NOT.
"I TOUCH THE NERVE AT THE BACK OF HIS NECK. HE CRUMPLES.

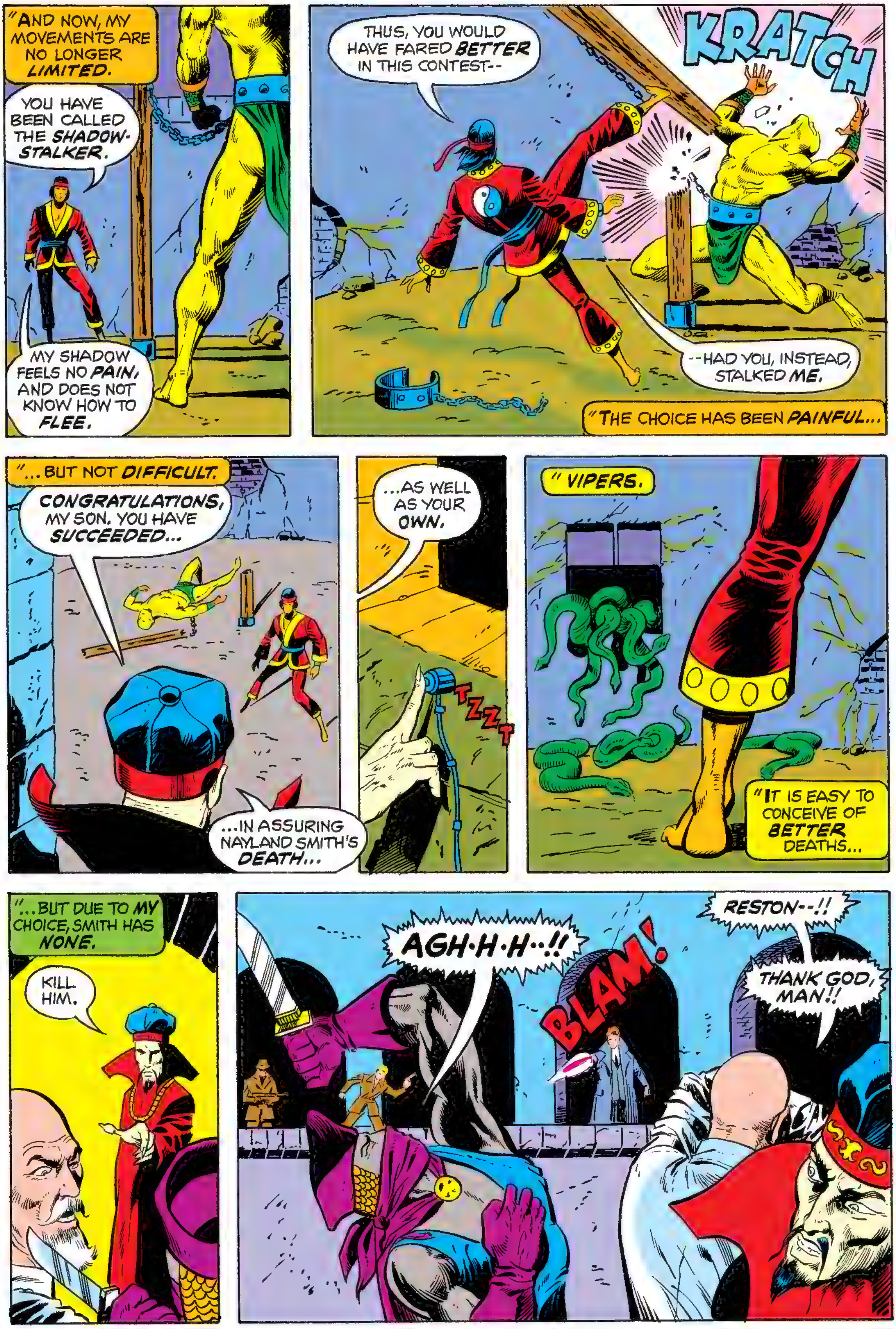

"INSIDE THE PASSAGEWAY...A CORRIDOR LEADING THROUGH RUBBLE...AND TOWARD--
"--AN APERTURE IN THE DANK STONE.
"I PUSH....
"THE STONE MOVES, RELUCTANTLY GRATING ON ANCIENT HINGES...
"THE STAIRWAY BEYOND LEADS DOWNWARD TO DUNGEON...AND DIMLY SEEN, FAR MORE THAN DUNGEON.
"AHEAD, IN THE GRADUALLY BRIGHTENING LIGHT--
"--PETRIE!!
PETRIE--?
...PETRIE...
YES, MY SON. YOU HAVE BEEN A GREATER FOOL THAN YOU IMAGINED.
THAT WHICH YOU MURDERED NEVER LIVED. A CREATION OF MY OWN MAKING, IT WAS DESIGNED TO RESEMBLE PETRIE IN EVERY WAY--SO PERFECTLY THAT IT EVEN FOOLED NAYLAND SMITH, PETRIE'S LIFELONG FRIEND. THERE WAS A TWOFOLD DESTINY FOR MY CREATION--FIRST, TO MASK THE FACT THAT I HAD ABDUCTED THE REAL DR. PETRIE, WHOM YOU SEE BEFORE YOU NOW, FOR REASONS I MYSELF HAVE NOT YET FULLY REALIZED...AND SECONDLY, TO TEST YOUR OBEDIENCE AND TO ENSURE THAT YOU WOULD BE HUNTED AND HOUNDED BY MY ENEMIES--FOREVER CONVINCED THAT THEY WERE EVIL.
BUT I DID NOT ANTICIPATE THAT SMITH WOULD UNDO THAT WHICH I HAD DEVOTED YOUR ENTIRE CHILDHOOD TO. I DID NOT BELIEVE THAT YOUR CAREFUL INDOCTRINATION COULD BE SO EASILY SHATTERED.

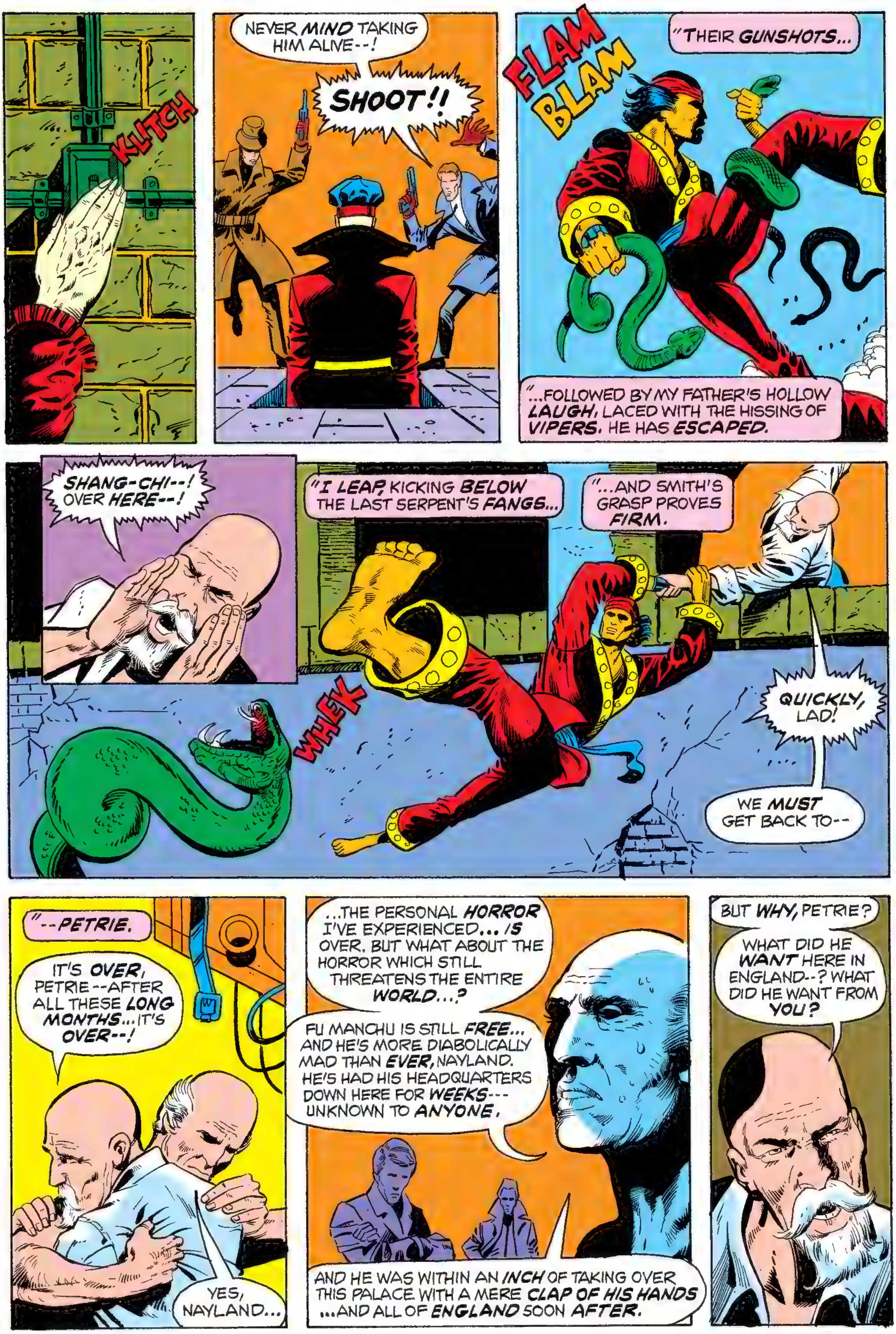

YOUR TEACHINGS WERE SHATTERED BY THEIR *LESSONS*, MY FATHER. THEY WERE DESTROYED BY THE *EVIL* WHICH HID BEHIND THEIR *EVERY WORD*.
BUT THERE IS A *LAST* PIECE OF KNOWLEDGE I WOULD *LEARN* FROM YOU:
WHY DO YOU *CONTINUE* MISTREATING THIS MAN? WHY IS HE HARNESSED, EVEN *NOW*, TO THIS MANNER OF *PAIN*?
FOR *VARIOUS* REASONS, SHANG-CHI, ALL AS *DIVERSE* AS THEY ARE *MANIFOLD*. TO LEARN WHAT HE AND SMITH HAVE LEARNED OF *ME*. TO HOLD HIM *HOSTAGE* FOR FUTURE NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE CORRUPT *GOVERNMENTS* OF THIS WORLD.
TO *EXPERIMENT* UPON. TO EXACT *REVENGE* UPON. TO *REVILE* AS *DEFEATED*. AND TO LOCATE AN ITEM WHICH WAS *STOLEN* FROM ME...
...AN EXTREMELY *PRECIOUS* ITEM...
LISTEN *WELL*, MY FATHER, WHEN I TELL YOU THAT I CURSE THE *BLOOD* WHICH FLOWS THROUGH MY *VEINS*. I CURSE THE FACT THAT IT IS THE SAME WHICH FLOWS THROUGH *YOUR* VEINS.
I CURSE THE FACT THAT I AM *ANGRY*. AND I CURSE THE DAY YOU TAUGHT ME TO *KILL*--
--FOR MY ANGER IS SUCH THAT I SHALL NOW *EMPLOY* THAT KNOWLEDGE.
I THINK *NOT*, MY SON...
KLAP!
"A SECTION OF THE *WALL* SLIDES OPEN...
"...REVEALING *SMITH*...AS TWO *PHANSIGARS* MOVE FORWARD TO *RESTRAIN* ME, WHEN RESTRAINT IS NOW *UNNECESSARY*.
YOU SEE, SHANG-CHI, I HAVE BEEN UNABLE TO *LEARN* FROM PETRIE THAT WHICH I *MUST* KNOW. THUS, I HAVE ABDUCTED *SMITH*, AND PLAN TO BRING THE TRUTH FROM *HIM*.
BUT I AM WILLING TO *FOREGO* THAT PLEASURE SHOULD YOU VENTURE A SINGLE THREATENING MOVE AGAINST MY *PERSONAGE*. I DO NOT THINK I NEED *ILLUSTRATE* THAT THE PHANSIGARS' DAGGERS WOULD BE *WET*...BEFORE SUCH A MOVE COULD BE *COMPLETED*.
THUS, I AM CONFIDENT YOU WILL *COOPERATE* AS MY PHANSIGARS CONDUCT BOTH YOU AND SMITH TO A *DIFFERENT* SECTION OF THIS PALACE'S BASEMENT.

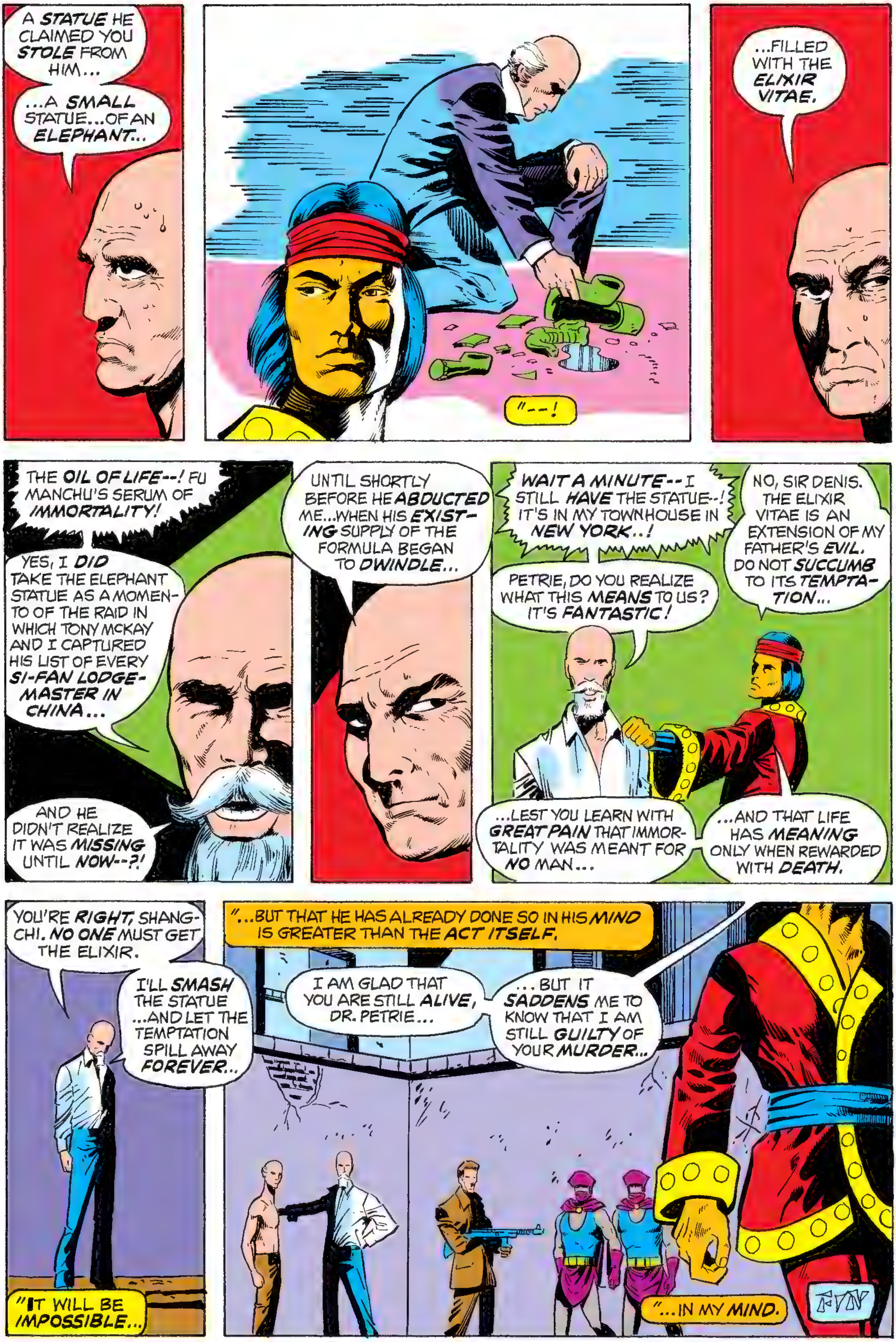

"I HAVE COOPERATED, AND I HAVE BEEN CONDUCTED TO A PLACE IN THESE CATACOMBS WHERE MY FATHER MAY LOOK DOWN UPON ME...
AS YOU CAN SEE, MY SON, THE PHANSIGARS' DAGGERS MAY STILL BECOME WET...THUS, I WOULD ADVISE YOU TO LISTEN TO MY WORDS.
I WISH YOU DEAD, SHANG-CHI, BUT I HAVE NOT YET CURSED THE BLOOD WHICH FLOWS THROUGH MY VEINS OR YOURS...

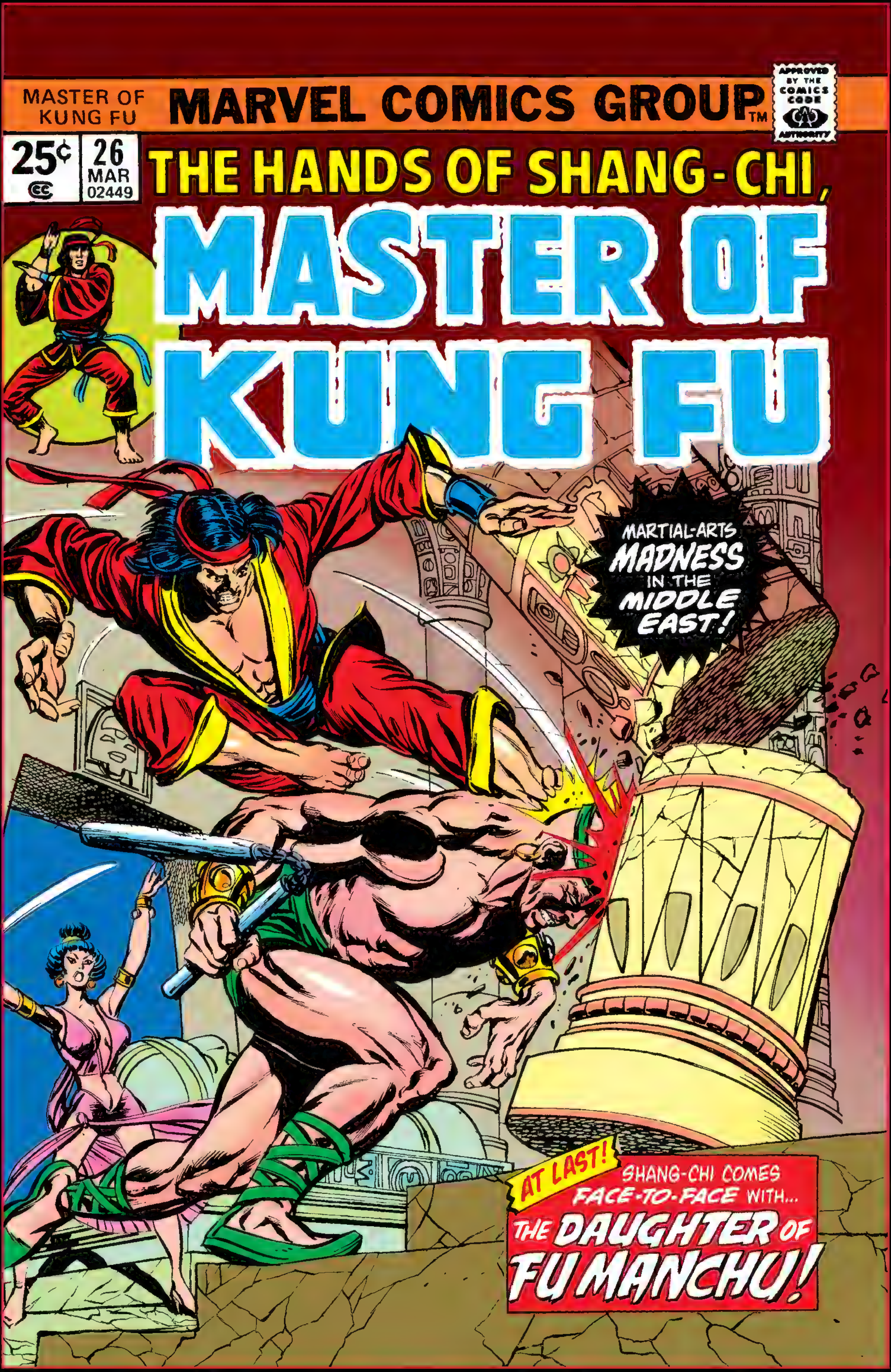

...THUS, I SHALL ALLOW YOU TO FIGHT FOR YOUR LIFE...AND FOR MY AMUSEMENT. OF COURSE, SHOULD YOU WIN--WHICH IS HIGHLY IMPROBABLE--SMITH WILL DIE INSTANTLY.
SUCH IS THE VALUE I PLACE UPON THE SHADOW-STALKER'S USE TO ME.
YOU'LL NEVER GET AWAY WITH THIS, YOU FIEND--!
SILENCE, SMITH. I HAVE HEARD FORTY YEARS OF YOUR CLICHÉS.
AND IF I LOSE...?
YOU WILL DIE INSTANTLY... AND SMITH WILL DIE VERY SLOWLY.
SLAY MY SON, SHADOW STALKER. NOW.


"HE STRIKES...
"...WITH SPIKED FIST...
"...AND TWIN MACES.
"CLEARLY, HIS TOPKNOT SERVES A PURPOSE TRANSCENDING ADORNMENT...
"THE POLE AND CHAIN ARE DESIGNED TO LIMIT MY MOVEMENTS.
CHWOK
"I MUST USE THEM TO ENHANCE SAME.
"HE IS ANGERED, AND WHIPS HIS HEAD FORWARD...
"THE MACE FOLLOWS, WITH A SHARP SNAP--
SHRANK
"--SEVERING MY CHAIN...
"...AS I HAVE PLANNED...


"AND NOW, MY MOVEMENTS ARE NO LONGER *LIMITED*.
YOU HAVE BEEN CALLED THE *SHADOW-STALKER*.
MY SHADOW FEELS NO *PAIN*, AND DOES NOT KNOW HOW TO *FLEE*.
THUS, YOU WOULD HAVE FARED *BETTER* IN THIS CONTEST--
KRATCH
--HAD YOU, INSTEAD, STALKED *ME*.
"THE CHOICE HAS BEEN *PAINFUL*...
"...BUT NOT *DIFFICULT*.
CONGRATULATIONS, MY SON. YOU HAVE *SUCCEEDED*...
...IN ASSURING NAYLAND SMITH'S *DEATH*...
...AS WELL AS YOUR *OWN*.
TZZZT
"*VIPERS*.
"IT IS EASY TO CONCEIVE OF *BETTER* DEATHS...
"...BUT DUE TO *MY* CHOICE, SMITH HAS *NONE*.
KILL HIM.
AGH-H-H--!!
BLAM!
RESTON--!!
THANK GOD, MAN!!


KLITCH
NEVER MIND TAKING HIM ALIVE--!
SHOOT!!
FLAM
BLAM
"THEIR GUNSHOTS...
...FOLLOWED BY MY FATHER'S HOLLOW LAUGH, LACED WITH THE HISSING OF VIPERS. HE HAS ESCAPED.
SHANG-CHI--! OVER HERE--!
"I LEAP, KICKING BELOW THE LAST SERPENT'S FANGS...
"...AND SMITH'S GRASP PROVES FIRM.
WHEK
QUICKLY, LAD!
WE MUST GET BACK TO--
"--PETRIE.
IT'S OVER, PETRIE--AFTER ALL THESE LONG MONTHS...IT'S OVER--!
YES, NAYLAND...
...THE PERSONAL HORROR I'VE EXPERIENCED... IS OVER. BUT WHAT ABOUT THE HORROR WHICH STILL THREATENS THE ENTIRE WORLD...?
FU MANCHU IS STILL FREE... AND HE'S MORE DIABOLICALLY MAD THAN EVER, NAYLAND. HE'S HAD HIS HEADQUARTERS DOWN HERE FOR WEEKS--- UNKNOWN TO ANYONE.
AND HE WAS WITHIN AN INCH OF TAKING OVER THIS PALACE WITH A MERE CLAP OF HIS HANDS ...AND ALL OF ENGLAND SOON AFTER.
BUT WHY, PETRIE?
WHAT DID HE WANT HERE IN ENGLAND--? WHAT DID HE WANT FROM YOU?


A STATUE HE CLAIMED YOU STOLE FROM HIM...
...A SMALL STATUE...OF AN ELEPHANT...
"--!
...FILLED WITH THE ELIXIR VITAE.
THE OIL OF LIFE--! FU MANCHU'S SERUM OF IMMORTALITY!
YES, I DID TAKE THE ELEPHANT STATUE AS A MOMENTO OF THE RAID IN WHICH TONY MCKAY AND I CAPTURED HIS LIST OF EVERY SI-FAN LODGE-MASTER IN CHINA...
AND HE DIDN'T REALIZE IT WAS MISSING UNTIL NOW--?!
UNTIL SHORTLY BEFORE HE ABDUCTED ME...WHEN HIS EXISTING SUPPLY OF THE FORMULA BEGAN TO DWINDLE...
WAIT A MINUTE--I STILL HAVE THE STATUE--! IT'S IN MY TOWNHOUSE IN NEW YORK..!
PETRIE, DO YOU REALIZE WHAT THIS MEANS TO US? IT'S FANTASTIC!
NO, SIR DENIS. THE ELIXIR VITAE IS AN EXTENSION OF MY FATHER'S EVIL. DO NOT SUCCUMB TO ITS TEMPTATION...
...LEST YOU LEARN WITH GREAT PAIN THAT IMMORTALITY WAS MEANT FOR NO MAN...
...AND THAT LIFE HAS MEANING ONLY WHEN REWARDED WITH DEATH.
YOU'RE RIGHT, SHANG-CHI. NO ONE MUST GET THE ELIXIR.
I'LL SMASH THE STATUE ...AND LET THE TEMPTATION SPILL AWAY FOREVER...
"IT WILL BE IMPOSSIBLE...
"...BUT THAT HE HAS ALREADY DONE SO IN HIS MIND IS GREATER THAN THE ACT ITSELF.
I AM GLAD THAT YOU ARE STILL ALIVE, DR. PETRIE...
...BUT IT SADDENS ME TO KNOW THAT I AM STILL GUILTY OF YOUR MURDER...
"...IN MY MIND.


MASTER OF KUNG FU
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25¢
26 MAR 02449
THE HANDS OF SHANG-CHI,
MASTER OF KUNG FU
MARTIAL-ARTS MADNESS IN THE MIDDLE EAST!
AT LAST!
SHANG-CHI COMES FACE-TO-FACE WITH...
THE DAUGHTER OF FU MANCHU!

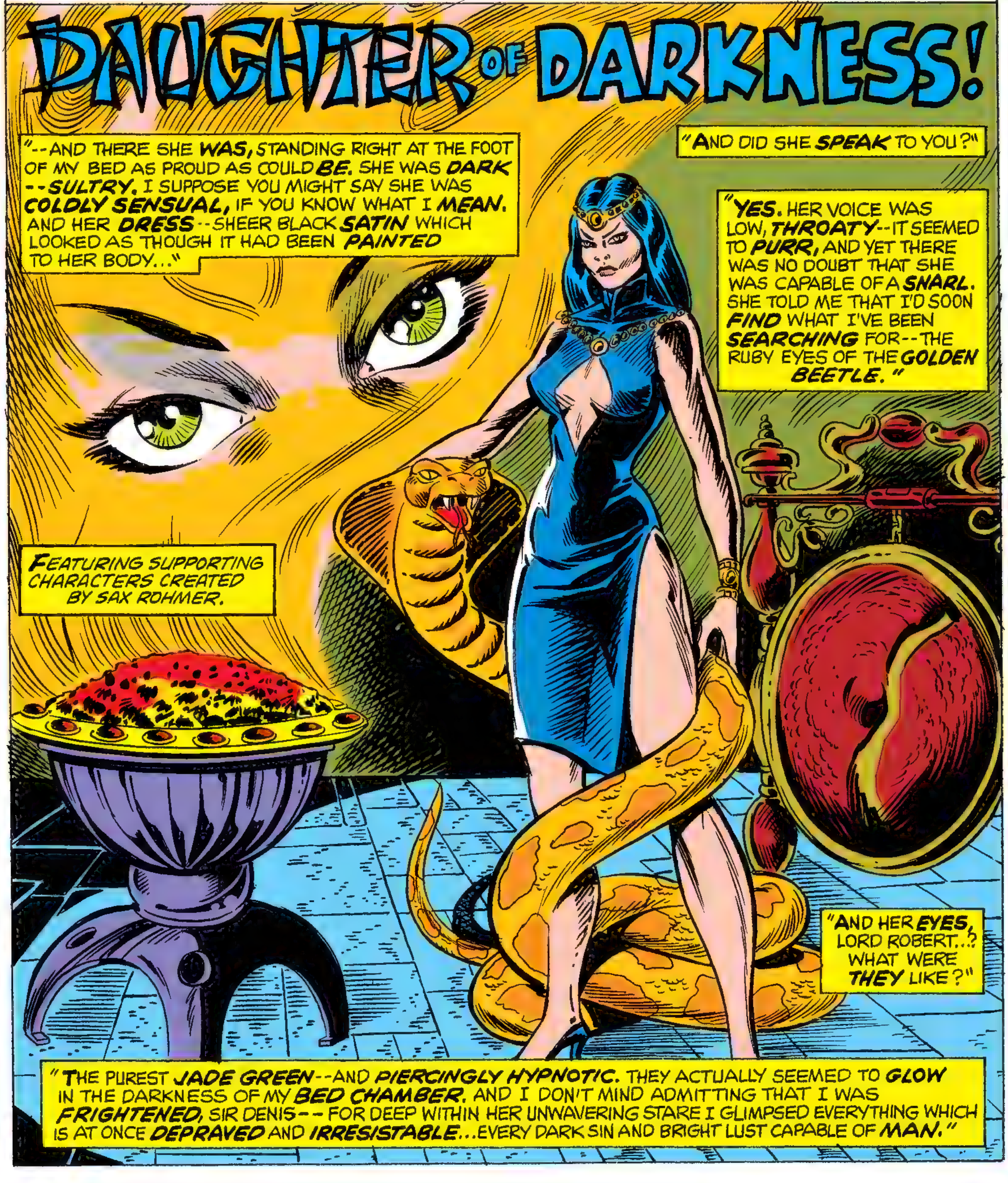
"Call me Shang-Chi, as my *father* did, when he raised me and molded my mind and my body in the vacuum of his Honan, China retreat. I learned many things from my father: That my name means "The Rising and Advancing of a Spirit," that my body could be forged into a living weapon through the discipline of kung fu, and that it might be used for the murder of a man called Dr. Petrie.

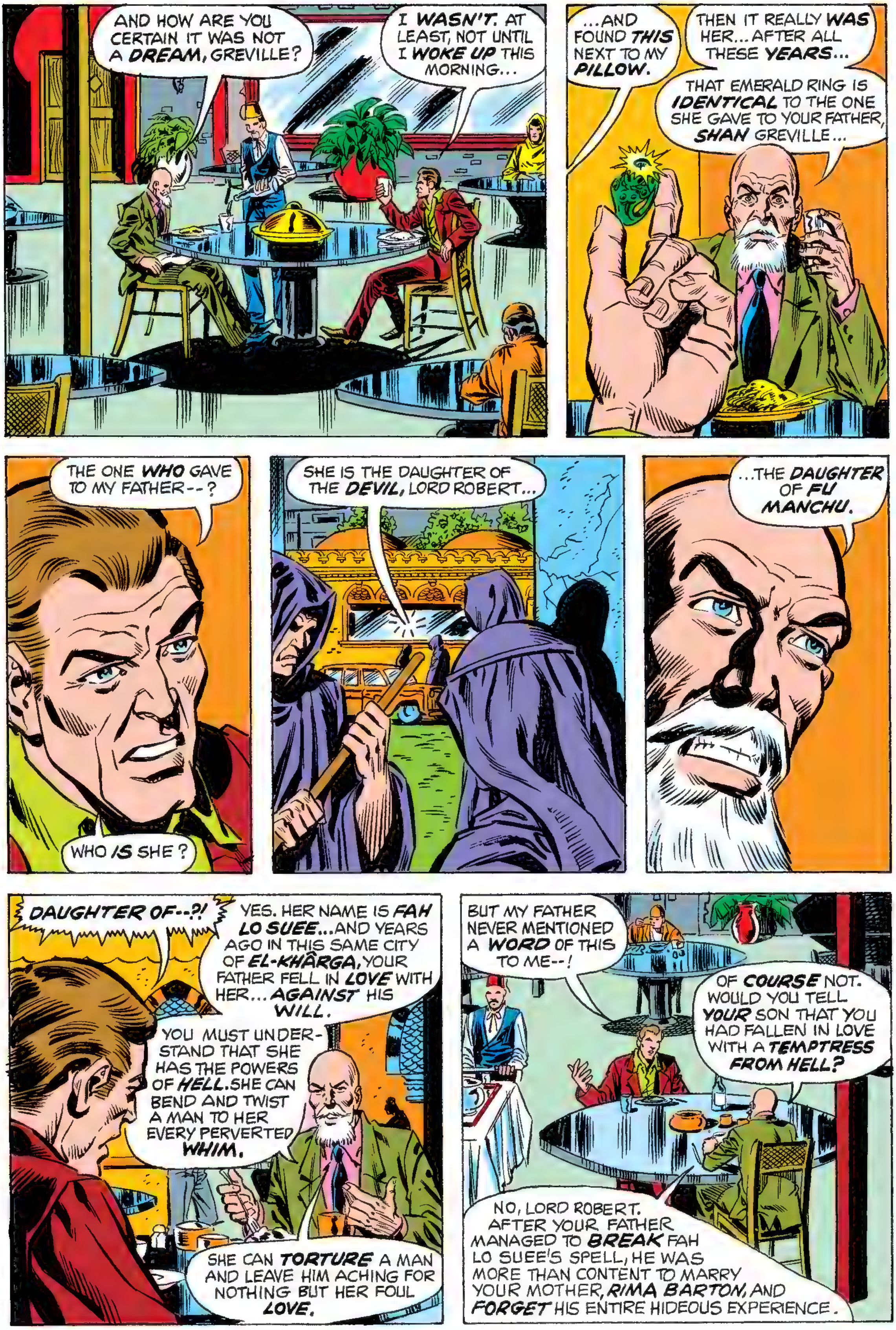
"Since then, I have learned that my father is **Dr. Fu Manchu** ... the most insidiously evil man on earth... and that to ***honor*** him would bring nothing but ***dishonor*** to the spirit of my ***name***."

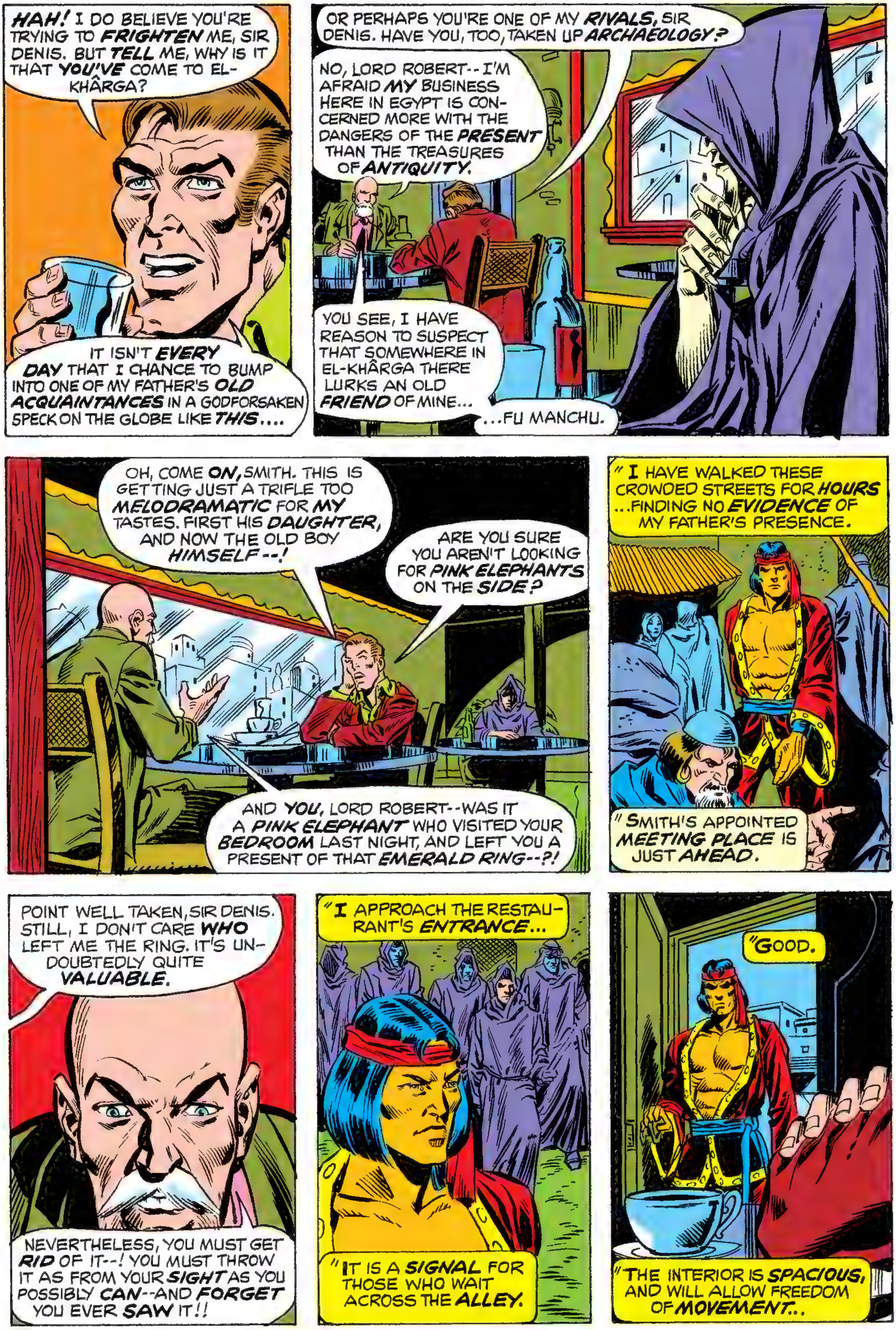
Stan Lee PRESENTS: MASTER OF KUNG FU!™

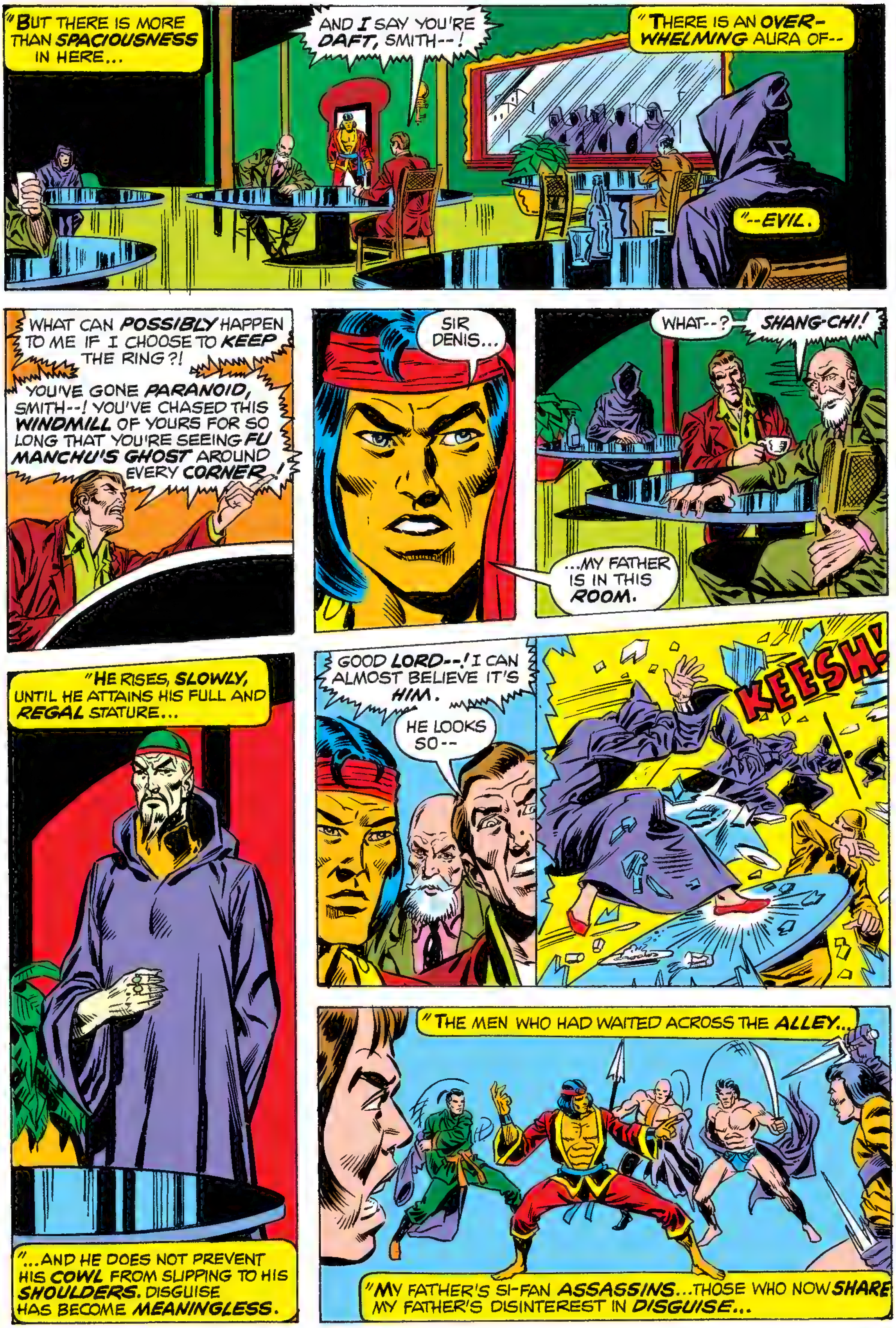
DOUG MOENCH *WRITER* **KEITH POLLARD** *ARTIST* **S. TRAPANI** *INKER* **C. JETTER** *LETTERER* **G. ROUSSOS** *COLORIST* **LEN WEIN** *EDITOR*

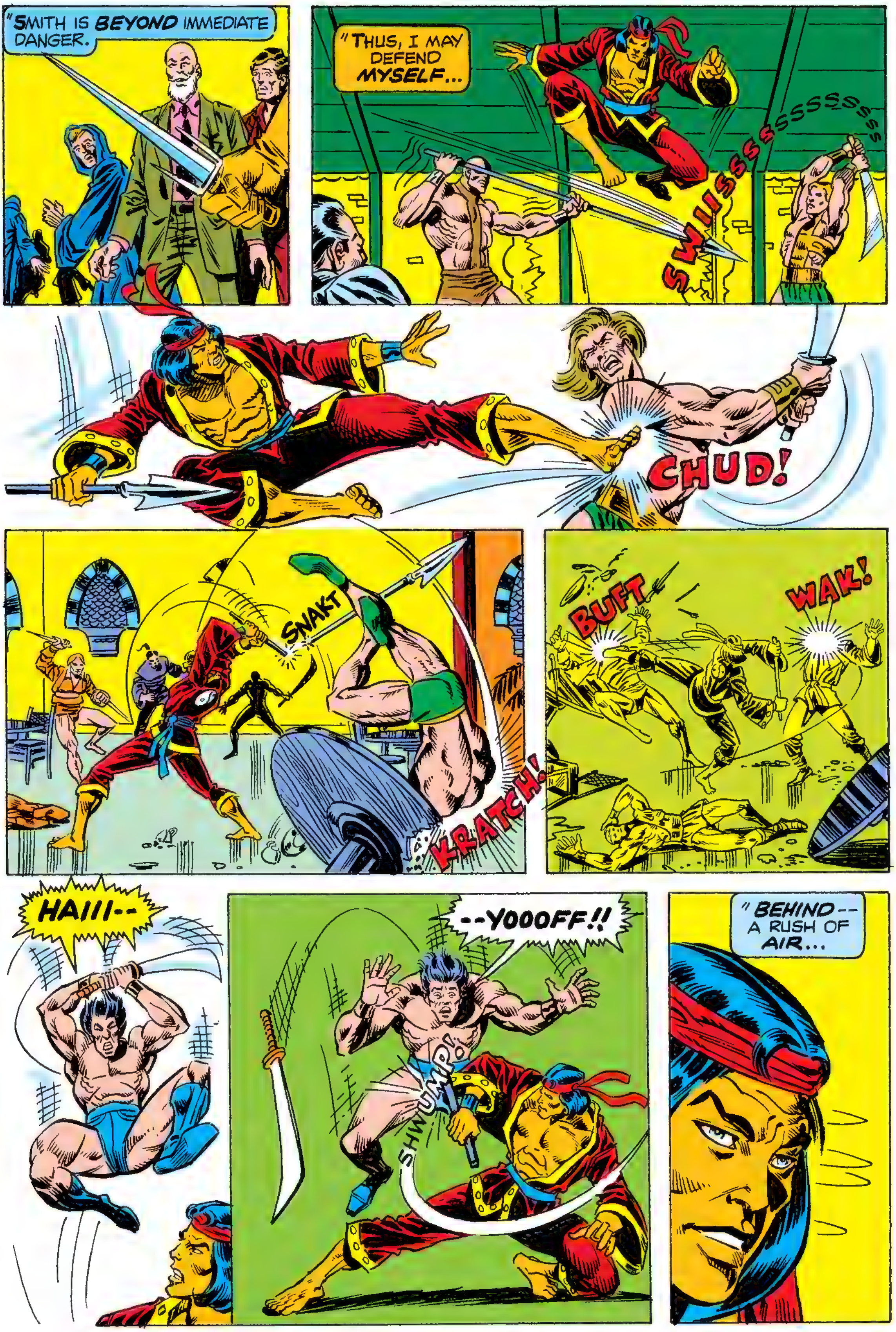
DAUGHTER OF DARKNESS!

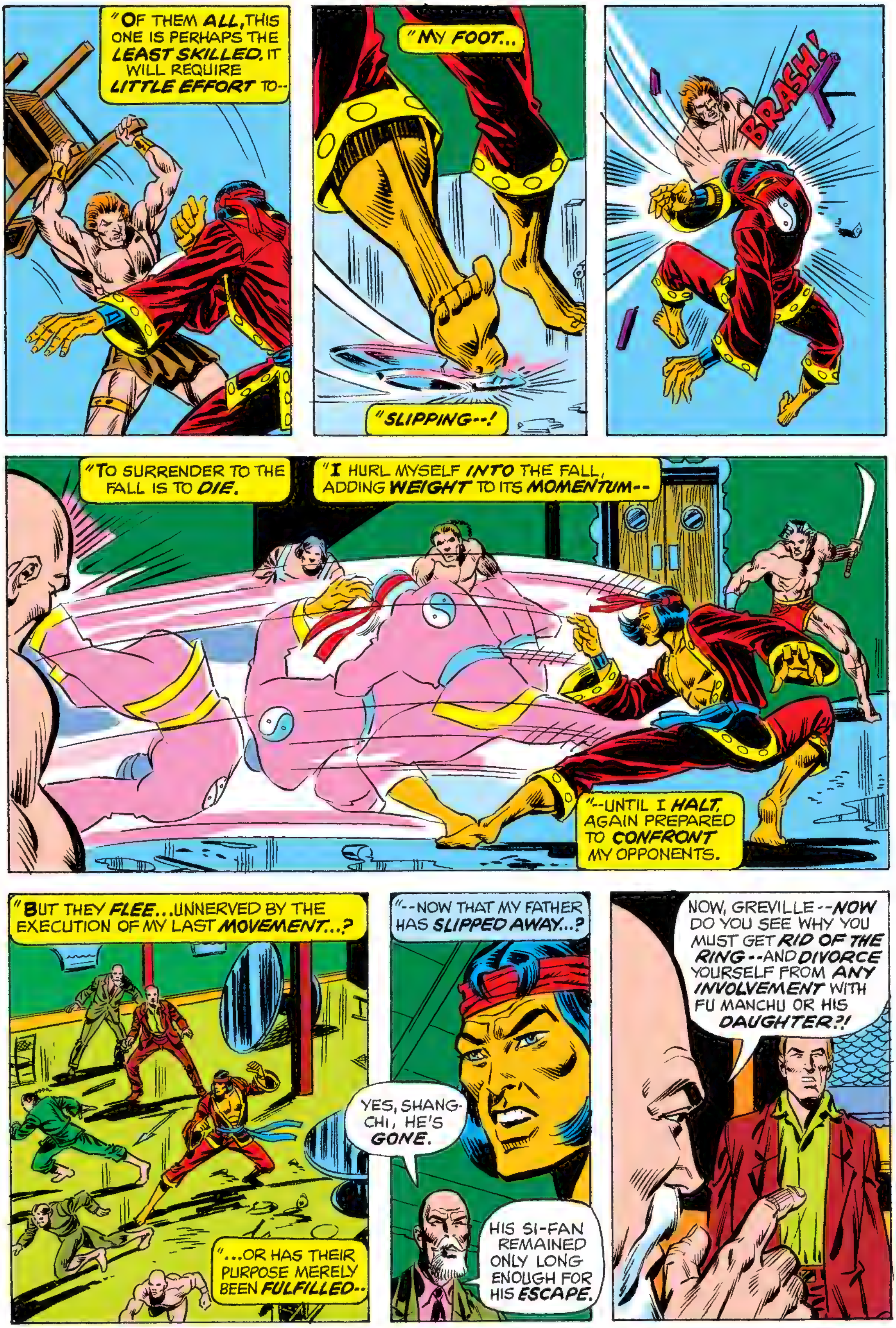

"--AND THERE SHE WAS, STANDING RIGHT AT THE FOOT OF MY BED AS PROUD AS COULD BE. SHE WAS DARK --SULTRY. I SUPPOSE YOU MIGHT SAY SHE WAS COLDLY SENSUAL, IF YOU KNOW WHAT I MEAN. AND HER DRESS--SHEER BLACK SATIN WHICH LOOKED AS THOUGH IT HAD BEEN PAINTED TO HER BODY..."
"AND DID SHE SPEAK TO YOU?"
"YES. HER VOICE WAS LOW, THROATY--IT SEEMED TO PURR, AND YET THERE WAS NO DOUBT THAT SHE WAS CAPABLE OF A SNARL. SHE TOLD ME THAT I'D SOON FIND WHAT I'VE BEEN SEARCHING FOR--THE RUBY EYES OF THE GOLDEN BEETLE."
FEATURING SUPPORTING CHARACTERS CREATED BY SAX ROHMER.
"AND HER EYES, LORD ROBERT..? WHAT WERE THEY LIKE?"
"THE PUREST JADE GREEN--AND PIERCINGLY HYPNOTIC. THEY ACTUALLY SEEMED TO GLOW IN THE DARKNESS OF MY BED CHAMBER. AND I DON'T MIND ADMITTING THAT I WAS FRIGHTENED, SIR DENIS--FOR DEEP WITHIN HER UNWAVERING STARE I GLIMPSED EVERYTHING WHICH IS AT ONCE DEPRAVED AND IRRESISTABLE...EVERY DARK SIN AND BRIGHT LUST CAPABLE OF MAN."

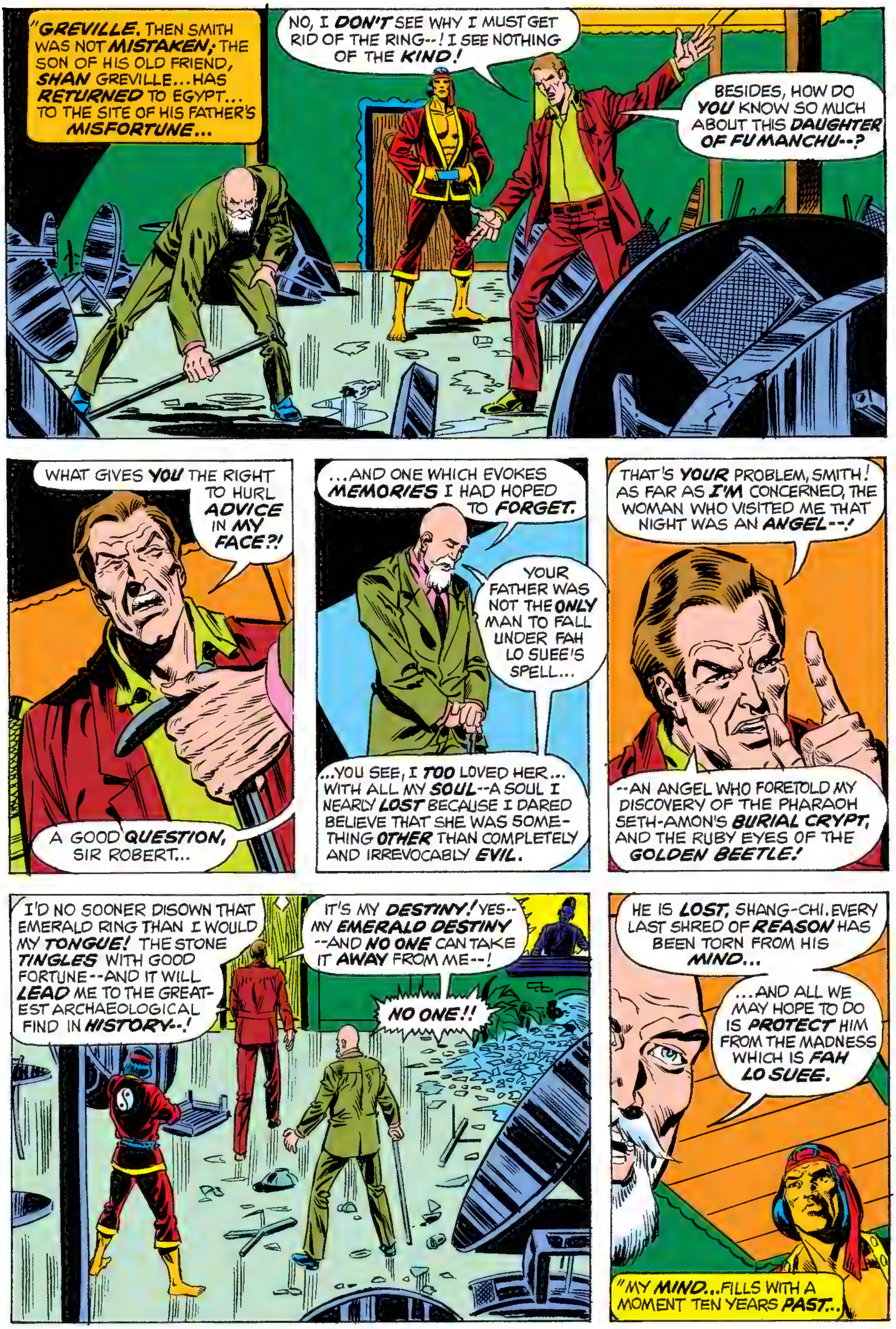

AND HOW ARE YOU CERTAIN IT WAS NOT A DREAM, GREVILLE?
I WASN'T. AT LEAST, NOT UNTIL I WOKE UP THIS MORNING...
...AND FOUND THIS NEXT TO MY PILLOW.
THEN IT REALLY WAS HER... AFTER ALL THESE YEARS...
THAT EMERALD RING IS IDENTICAL TO THE ONE SHE GAVE TO YOUR FATHER, SHAN GREVILLE...
THE ONE WHO GAVE TO MY FATHER--?
WHO IS SHE?
SHE IS THE DAUGHTER OF THE DEVIL, LORD ROBERT...
...THE DAUGHTER OF FU MANCHU.
DAUGHTER OF--?!
YES. HER NAME IS FAH LO SUEE...AND YEARS AGO IN THIS SAME CITY OF EL-KHÂRGA, YOUR FATHER FELL IN LOVE WITH HER... AGAINST HIS WILL.
YOU MUST UNDERSTAND THAT SHE HAS THE POWERS OF HELL. SHE CAN BEND AND TWIST A MAN TO HER EVERY PERVERTED WHIM.
SHE CAN TORTURE A MAN AND LEAVE HIM ACHING FOR NOTHING BUT HER FOUL LOVE.
BUT MY FATHER NEVER MENTIONED A WORD OF THIS TO ME--!
OF COURSE NOT. WOULD YOU TELL YOUR SON THAT YOU HAD FALLEN IN LOVE WITH A TEMPTRESS FROM HELL?
NO, LORD ROBERT. AFTER YOUR FATHER MANAGED TO BREAK FAH LO SUEE'S SPELL, HE WAS MORE THAN CONTENT TO MARRY YOUR MOTHER, RIMA BARTON, AND FORGET HIS ENTIRE HIDEOUS EXPERIENCE.

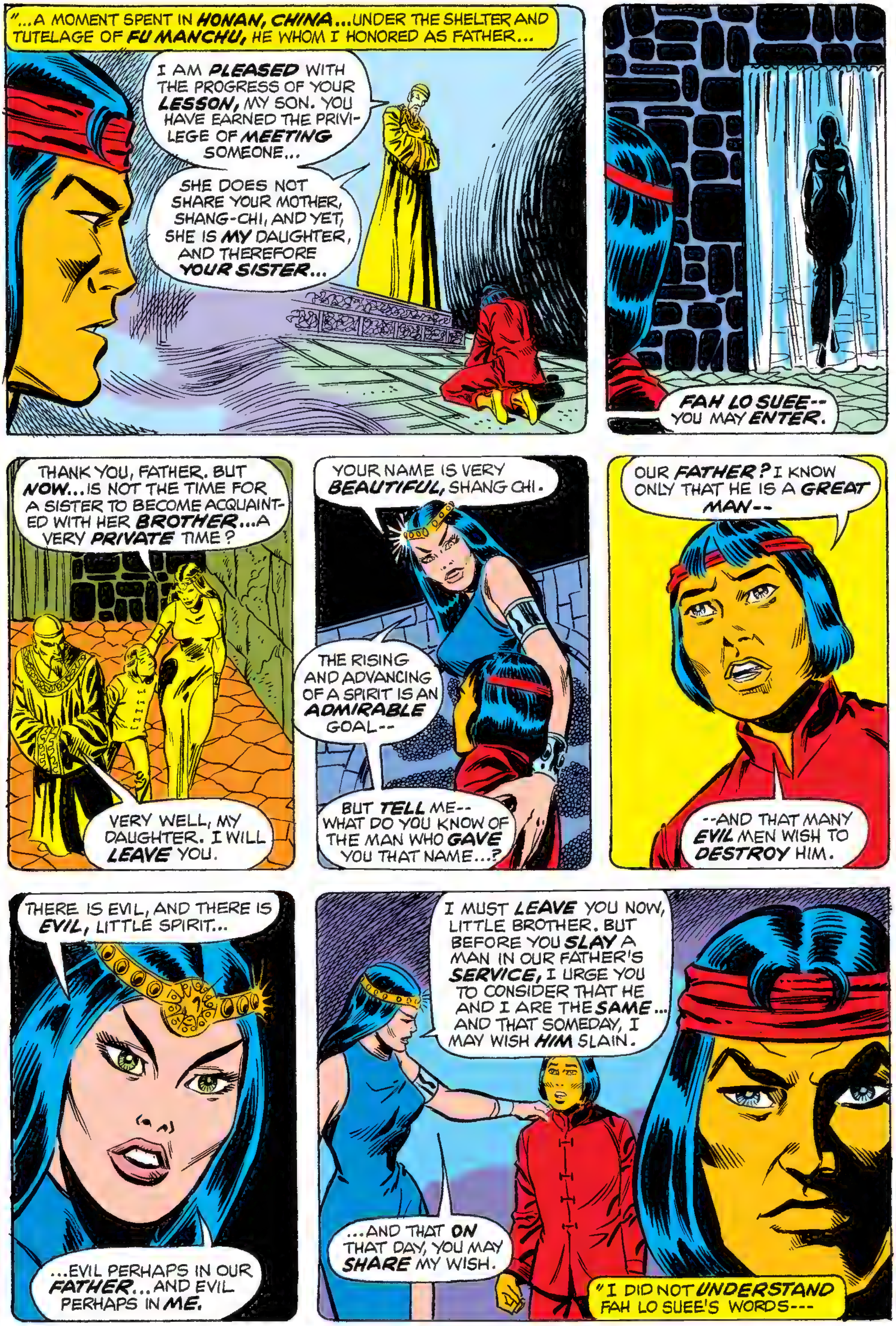

HAH! I DO BELIEVE YOU'RE TRYING TO FRIGHTEN ME, SIR DENIS. BUT TELL ME, WHY IS IT THAT YOU'VE COME TO EL-KHÂRGA?
IT ISN'T EVERY DAY THAT I CHANCE TO BUMP INTO ONE OF MY FATHER'S OLD ACQUAINTANCES IN A GODFORSAKEN SPECK ON THE GLOBE LIKE THIS....
OR PERHAPS YOU'RE ONE OF MY RIVALS, SIR DENIS. HAVE YOU, TOO, TAKEN UP ARCHAEOLOGY?
NO, LORD ROBERT--I'M AFRAID MY BUSINESS HERE IN EGYPT IS CONCERNED MORE WITH THE DANGERS OF THE PRESENT THAN THE TREASURES OF ANTIQUITY.
YOU SEE, I HAVE REASON TO SUSPECT THAT SOMEWHERE IN EL-KHÂRGA THERE LURKS AN OLD FRIEND OF MINE...
...FU MANCHU.
OH, COME ON, SMITH. THIS IS GETTING JUST A TRIFLE TOO MELODRAMATIC FOR MY TASTES. FIRST HIS DAUGHTER, AND NOW THE OLD BOY HIMSELF--!
ARE YOU SURE YOU AREN'T LOOKING FOR PINK ELEPHANTS ON THE SIDE?
AND YOU, LORD ROBERT--WAS IT A PINK ELEPHANT WHO VISITED YOUR BEDROOM LAST NIGHT, AND LEFT YOU A PRESENT OF THAT EMERALD RING--?!
"I HAVE WALKED THESE CROWDED STREETS FOR HOURS ...FINDING NO EVIDENCE OF MY FATHER'S PRESENCE.
"SMITH'S APPOINTED MEETING PLACE IS JUST AHEAD.
POINT WELL TAKEN, SIR DENIS. STILL, I DON'T CARE WHO LEFT ME THE RING. IT'S UNDOUBTEDLY QUITE VALUABLE.
NEVERTHELESS, YOU MUST GET RID OF IT--! YOU MUST THROW IT AS FROM YOUR SIGHT AS YOU POSSIBLY CAN--AND FORGET YOU EVER SAW IT!!
"I APPROACH THE RESTAURANT'S ENTRANCE...
"IT IS A SIGNAL FOR THOSE WHO WAIT ACROSS THE ALLEY.
"GOOD.
"THE INTERIOR IS SPACIOUS, AND WILL ALLOW FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT...

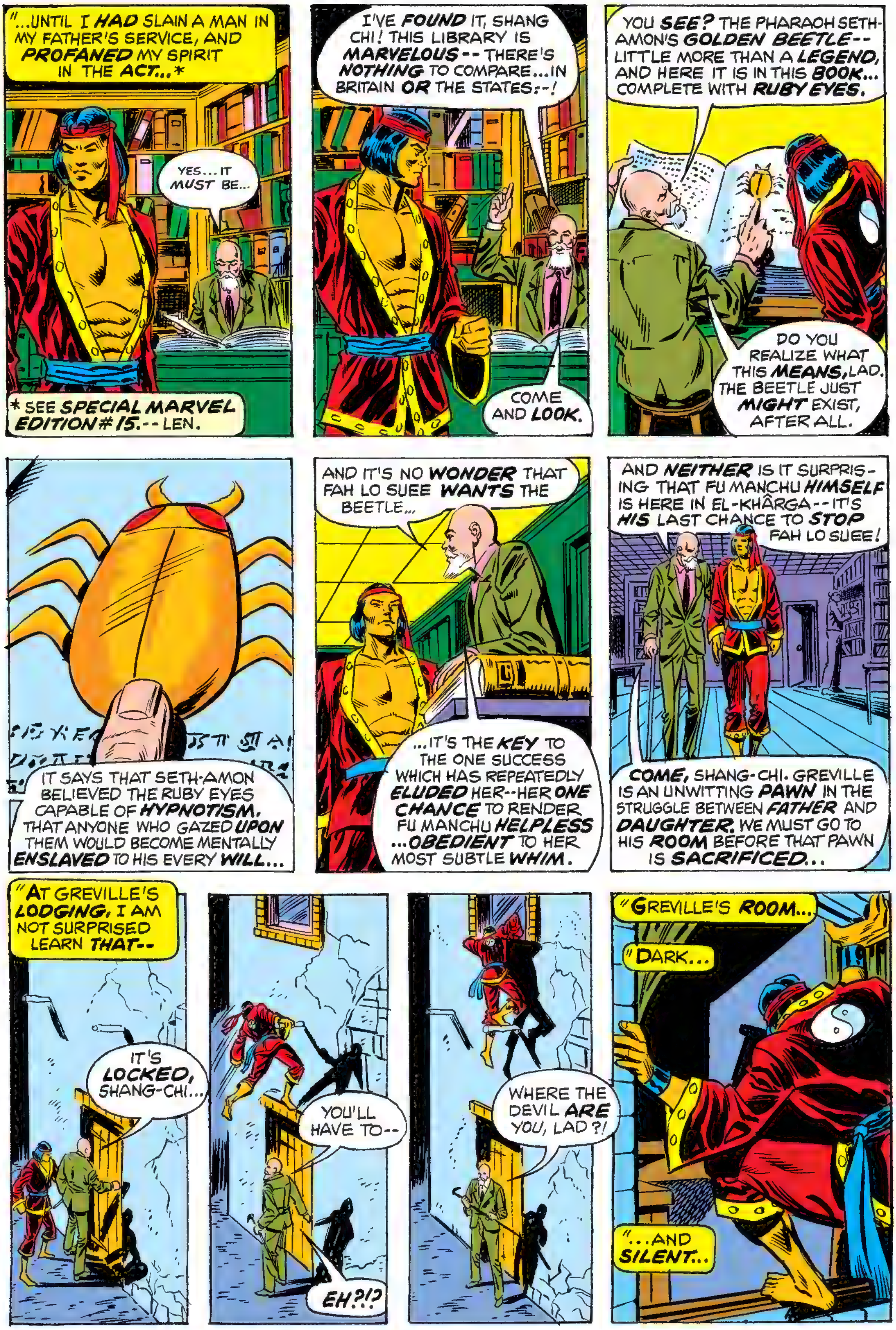

"BUT THERE IS MORE THAN SPACIOUSNESS IN HERE...
AND I SAY YOU'RE DAFT, SMITH--!
"THERE IS AN OVERWHELMING AURA OF--
"--EVIL.
WHAT CAN POSSIBLY HAPPEN TO ME IF I CHOOSE TO KEEP THE RING?!
YOU'VE GONE PARANOID, SMITH--! YOU'VE CHASED THIS WINDMILL OF YOURS FOR SO LONG THAT YOU'RE SEEING FU MANCHU'S GHOST AROUND EVERY CORNER!
SIR DENIS...
...MY FATHER IS IN THIS ROOM.
WHAT--?
SHANG-CHI!
"HE RISES, SLOWLY, UNTIL HE ATTAINS HIS FULL AND REGAL STATURE...
"...AND HE DOES NOT PREVENT HIS COWL FROM SLIPPING TO HIS SHOULDERS. DISGUISE HAS BECOME MEANINGLESS.
GOOD LORD--! I CAN ALMOST BELIEVE IT'S HIM.
HE LOOKS SO--
KEESH!
"THE MEN WHO HAD WAITED ACROSS THE ALLEY...
"MY FATHER'S SI-FAN ASSASSINS...THOSE WHO NOW SHARE MY FATHER'S DISINTEREST IN DISGUISE...

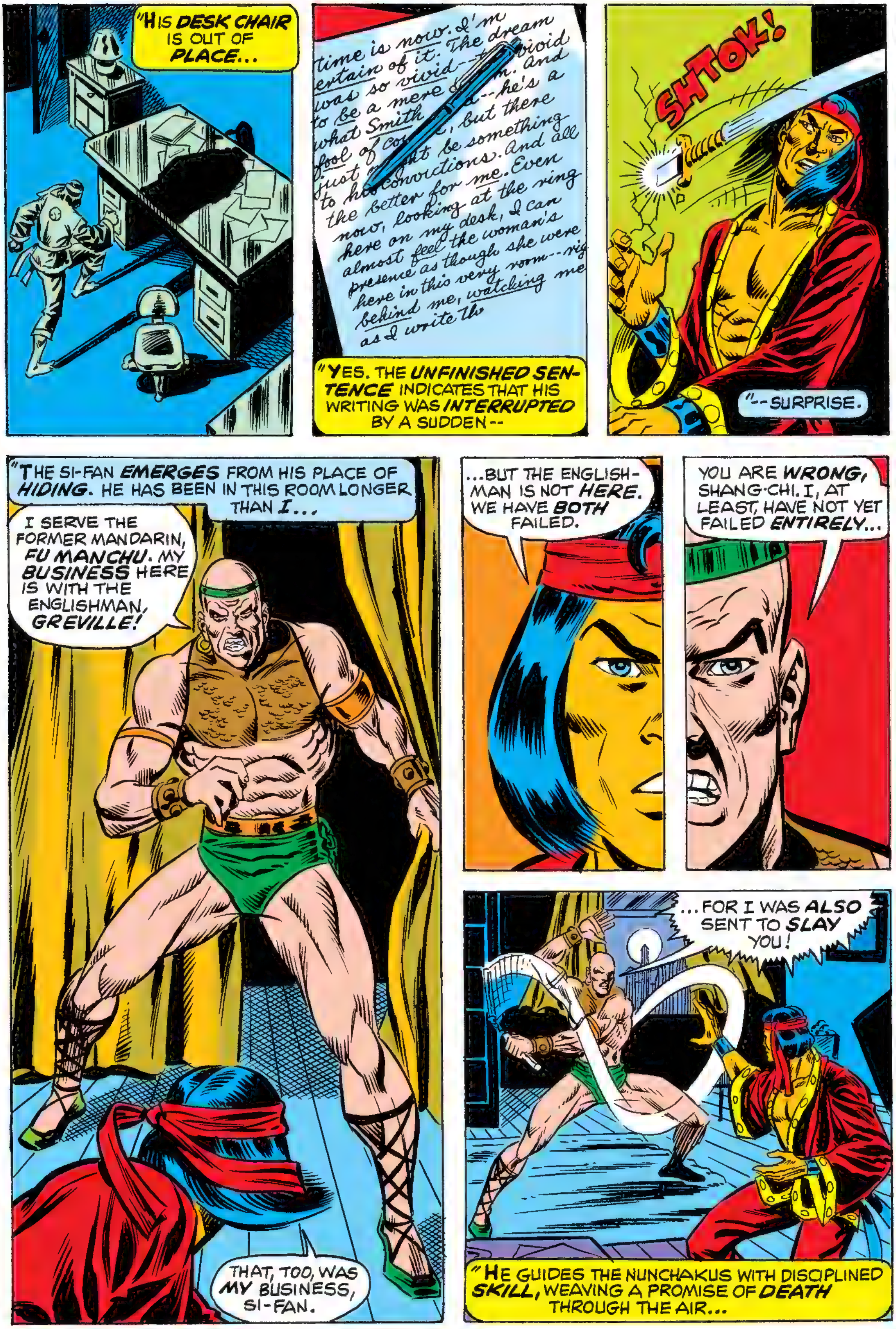

"SMITH IS BEYOND IMMEDIATE DANGER.
"THUS, I MAY DEFEND MYSELF...
SWIISSSSSSSSSSSSS
CHUD!
SNAKT
KRATCH!
BUFT
WAK!
HAIII--
--YOOOFF!!
SHWUMP!
"BEHIND-- A RUSH OF AIR...

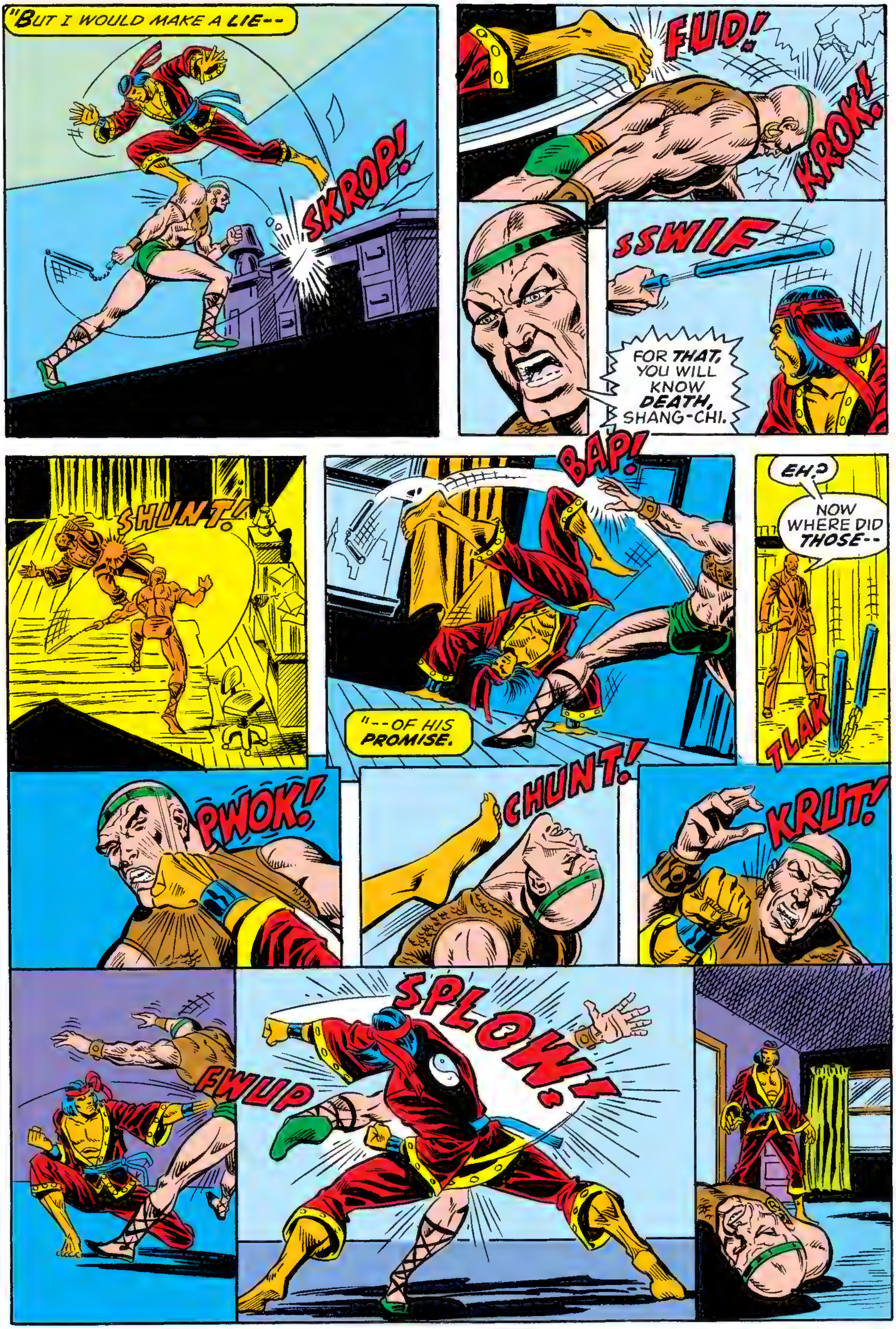

"OF THEM ALL, THIS ONE IS PERHAPS THE LEAST SKILLED. IT WILL REQUIRE LITTLE EFFORT TO--
"MY FOOT...
"SLIPPING--!
BRASH!
"TO SURRENDER TO THE FALL IS TO DIE.
"I HURL MYSELF INTO THE FALL, ADDING WEIGHT TO ITS MOMENTUM--
"--UNTIL I HALT, AGAIN PREPARED TO CONFRONT MY OPPONENTS.
"BUT THEY FLEE... UNNERVED BY THE EXECUTION OF MY LAST MOVEMENT...?
"...OR HAS THEIR PURPOSE MERELY BEEN FULFILLED--
"--NOW THAT MY FATHER HAS SLIPPED AWAY...?
YES, SHANG-CHI, HE'S GONE.
HIS SI-FAN REMAINED ONLY LONG ENOUGH FOR HIS ESCAPE.
NOW, GREVILLE--NOW DO YOU SEE WHY YOU MUST GET RID OF THE RING--AND DIVORCE YOURSELF FROM ANY INVOLVEMENT WITH FU MANCHU OR HIS DAUGHTER?!

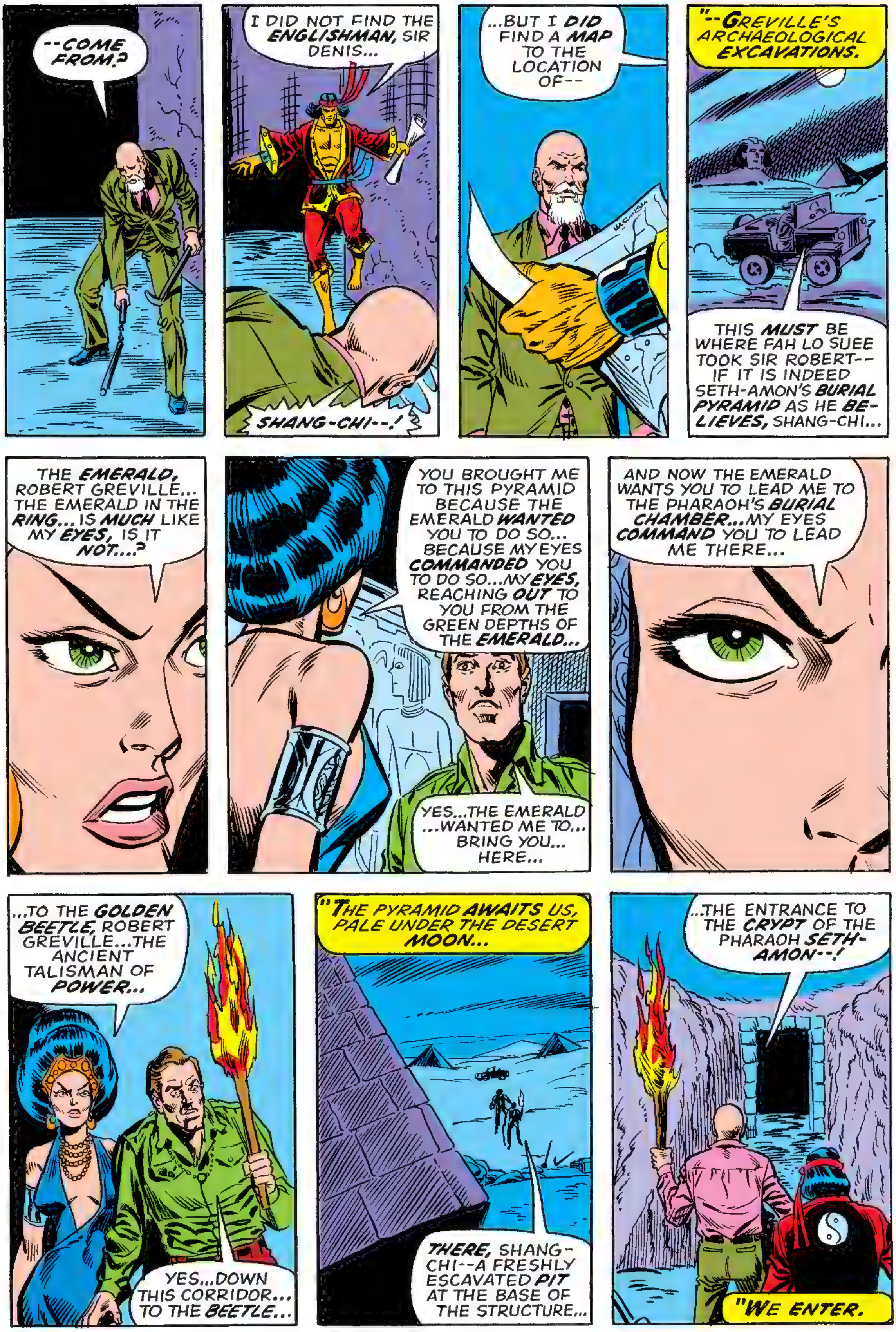

"GREVILLE. THEN SMITH WAS NOT MISTAKEN; THE SON OF HIS OLD FRIEND, SHAN GREVILLE...HAS RETURNED TO EGYPT... TO THE SITE OF HIS FATHER'S MISFORTUNE...
NO, I DON'T SEE WHY I MUST GET RID OF THE RING--! I SEE NOTHING OF THE KIND!
BESIDES, HOW DO YOU KNOW SO MUCH ABOUT THIS DAUGHTER OF FU MANCHU--?
WHAT GIVES YOU THE RIGHT TO HURL ADVICE IN MY FACE?!
A GOOD QUESTION, SIR ROBERT...
...AND ONE WHICH EVOKES MEMORIES I HAD HOPED TO FORGET.
YOUR FATHER WAS NOT THE ONLY MAN TO FALL UNDER FAH LO SUEE'S SPELL...
...YOU SEE, I TOO LOVED HER... WITH ALL MY SOUL--A SOUL I NEARLY LOST BECAUSE I DARED BELIEVE THAT SHE WAS SOMETHING OTHER THAN COMPLETELY AND IRREVOCABLY EVIL.
THAT'S YOUR PROBLEM, SMITH! AS FAR AS I'M CONCERNED, THE WOMAN WHO VISITED ME THAT NIGHT WAS AN ANGEL--!
--AN ANGEL WHO FORETOLD MY DISCOVERY OF THE PHARAOH SETH-AMON'S BURIAL CRYPT, AND THE RUBY EYES OF THE GOLDEN BEETLE!
I'D NO SOONER DISOWN THAT EMERALD RING THAN I WOULD MY TONGUE! THE STONE TINGLES WITH GOOD FORTUNE--AND IT WILL LEAD ME TO THE GREATEST ARCHAEOLOGICAL FIND IN HISTORY--!
IT'S MY DESTINY! YES--MY EMERALD DESTINY--AND NO ONE CAN TAKE IT AWAY FROM ME--!
NO ONE!!
HE IS LOST, SHANG-CHI. EVERY LAST SHRED OF REASON HAS BEEN TORN FROM HIS MIND...
...AND ALL WE MAY HOPE TO DO IS PROTECT HIM FROM THE MADNESS WHICH IS FAH LO SUEE.
"MY MIND...FILLS WITH A MOMENT TEN YEARS PAST...

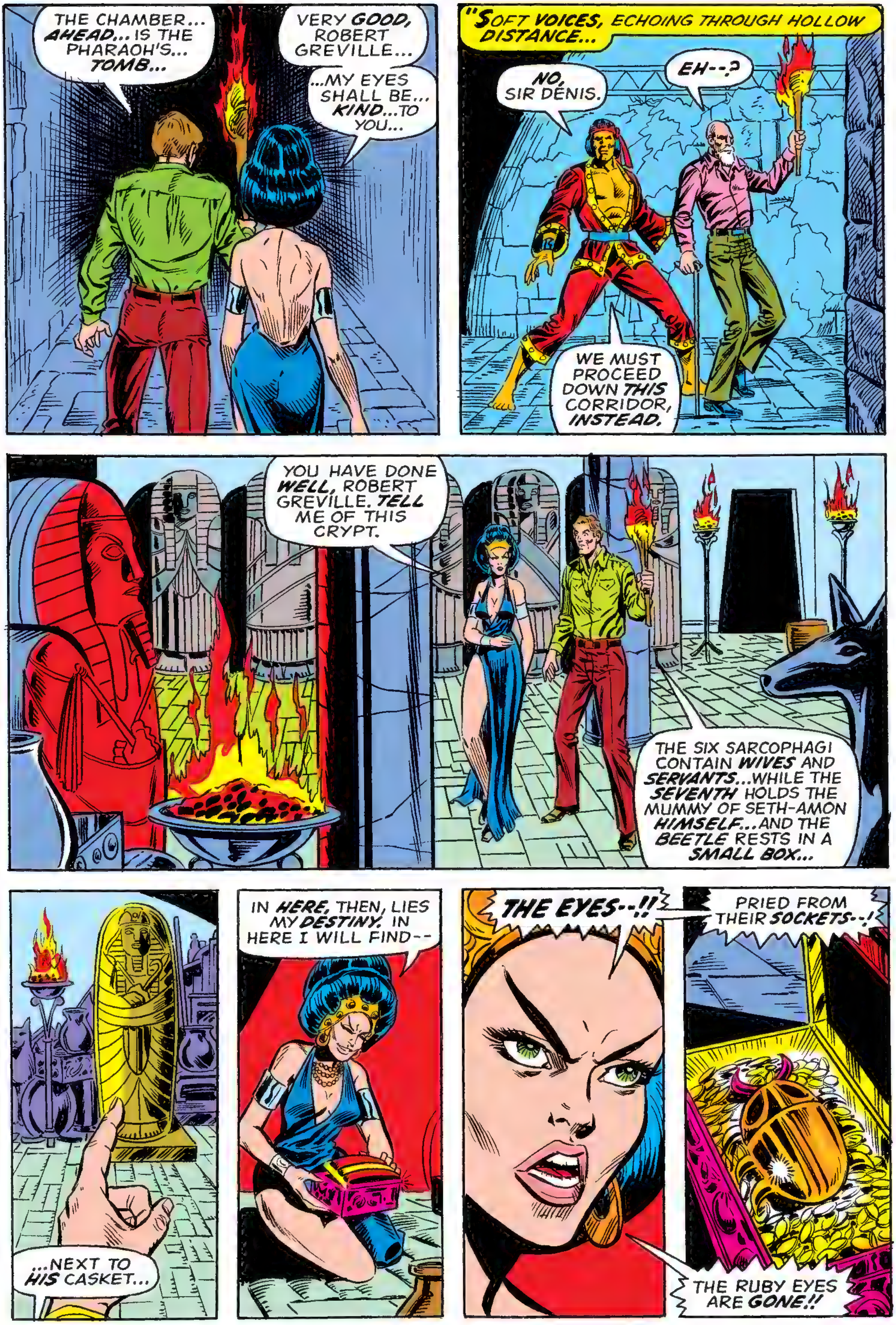

"...A MOMENT SPENT IN **HONAN, CHINA**...UNDER THE SHELTER AND TUTELAGE OF **FU MANCHU,** HE WHOM I HONORED AS FATHER...
I AM **PLEASED** WITH THE PROGRESS OF YOUR **LESSON,** MY SON. YOU HAVE EARNED THE PRIVILEGE OF **MEETING** SOMEONE...
SHE DOES NOT SHARE YOUR MOTHER, SHANG-CHI, AND YET, SHE IS **MY** DAUGHTER, AND THEREFORE **YOUR SISTER...**
FAH LO SUEE-- YOU MAY **ENTER.**
THANK YOU, FATHER. BUT **NOW...**IS NOT THE TIME FOR A SISTER TO BECOME ACQUAINTED WITH HER **BROTHER...**A VERY **PRIVATE** TIME?
VERY WELL, MY DAUGHTER. I WILL **LEAVE** YOU.
YOUR NAME IS VERY **BEAUTIFUL,** SHANG CHI.
THE RISING AND ADVANCING OF A SPIRIT IS AN **ADMIRABLE** GOAL--
BUT **TELL** ME-- WHAT DO YOU KNOW OF THE MAN WHO **GAVE** YOU THAT NAME...?
OUR **FATHER?** I KNOW ONLY THAT HE IS A **GREAT MAN--**
--AND THAT MANY **EVIL** MEN WISH TO **DESTROY** HIM.
THERE IS EVIL, AND THERE IS **EVIL,** LITTLE SPIRIT...
...EVIL PERHAPS IN OUR **FATHER**...AND EVIL PERHAPS IN **ME.**
I MUST **LEAVE** YOU NOW, LITTLE BROTHER. BUT BEFORE YOU **SLAY** A MAN IN OUR FATHER'S **SERVICE,** I URGE YOU TO CONSIDER THAT HE AND I ARE THE **SAME**... AND THAT SOMEDAY, I MAY WISH **HIM** SLAIN.
...AND THAT **ON** THAT DAY, YOU MAY **SHARE** MY WISH.
"I DID NOT **UNDERSTAND** FAH LO SUEE'S WORDS---

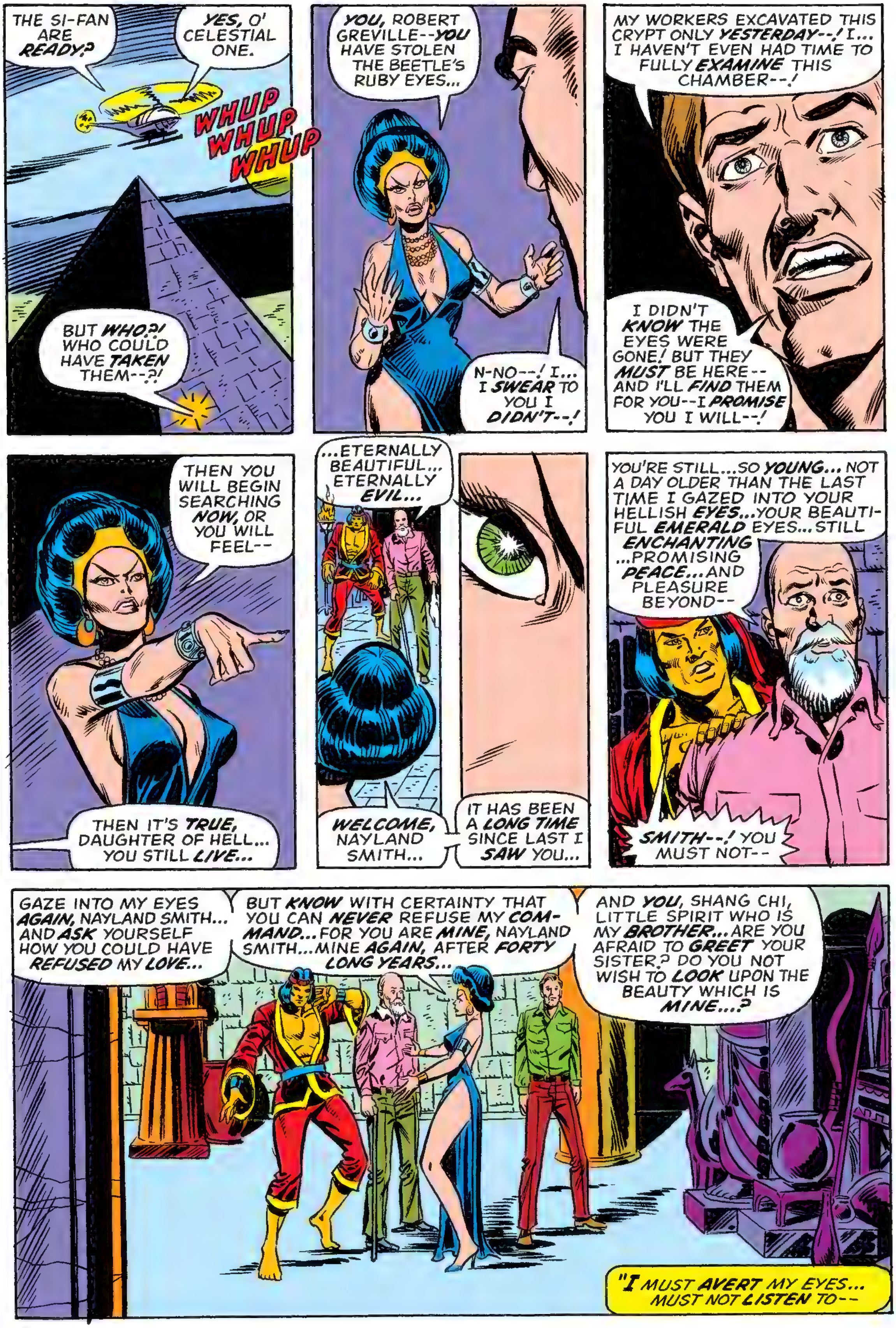

"...UNTIL I HAD SLAIN A MAN IN MY FATHER'S SERVICE, AND PROFANED MY SPIRIT IN THE ACT...*
YES... IT MUST BE...
* SEE SPECIAL MARVEL EDITION #15.-- LEN.
I'VE FOUND IT, SHANG CHI! THIS LIBRARY IS MARVELOUS -- THERE'S NOTHING TO COMPARE... IN BRITAIN OR THE STATES--!
COME AND LOOK.
YOU SEE? THE PHARAOH SETH-AMON'S GOLDEN BEETLE -- LITTLE MORE THAN A LEGEND, AND HERE IT IS IN THIS BOOK... COMPLETE WITH RUBY EYES.
DO YOU REALIZE WHAT THIS MEANS, LAD. THE BEETLE JUST MIGHT EXIST, AFTER ALL.
IT SAYS THAT SETH-AMON BELIEVED THE RUBY EYES CAPABLE OF HYPNOTISM. THAT ANYONE WHO GAZED UPON THEM WOULD BECOME MENTALLY ENSLAVED TO HIS EVERY WILL...
AND IT'S NO WONDER THAT FAH LO SUEE WANTS THE BEETLE...
...IT'S THE KEY TO THE ONE SUCCESS WHICH HAS REPEATEDLY ELUDED HER--HER ONE CHANCE TO RENDER FU MANCHU HELPLESS ...OBEDIENT TO HER MOST SUBTLE WHIM.
AND NEITHER IS IT SURPRISING THAT FU MANCHU HIMSELF IS HERE IN EL-KHÂRGA -- IT'S HIS LAST CHANCE TO STOP FAH LO SUEE!
COME, SHANG-CHI. GREVILLE IS AN UNWITTING PAWN IN THE STRUGGLE BETWEEN FATHER AND DAUGHTER. WE MUST GO TO HIS ROOM BEFORE THAT PAWN IS SACRIFICED...
"AT GREVILLE'S LODGING, I AM NOT SURPRISED TO LEARN THAT--
IT'S LOCKED, SHANG-CHI...
YOU'LL HAVE TO--
EH?!?
WHERE THE DEVIL ARE YOU, LAD?!
"GREVILLE'S ROOM...
"DARK...
"...AND SILENT...

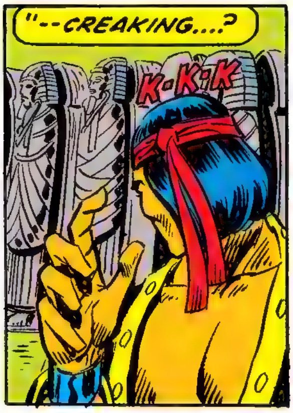

"HIS DESK CHAIR IS OUT OF PLACE...
time is now. I'm
ertain of it. The dream
was so vivid--t vioid
to be a mere d m. And
what Smith a--he's a
fool of co e, but there
just m ht be something
to his convictions. And all
the better for me. Even
now, looking at the ring
here on my desk, I can
almost feel the woman's
presence as though she were
here in this very room--rig
behind me, watching me
as I write th
"YES. THE UNFINISHED SENTENCE INDICATES THAT HIS WRITING WAS INTERRUPTED BY A SUDDEN--
SHTOK!
"--SURPRISE.
"THE SI-FAN EMERGES FROM HIS PLACE OF HIDING. HE HAS BEEN IN THIS ROOM LONGER THAN I...
I SERVE THE FORMER MANDARIN, FU MANCHU. MY BUSINESS HERE IS WITH THE ENGLISHMAN, GREVILLE!
THAT, TOO, WAS MY BUSINESS, SI-FAN.
...BUT THE ENGLISHMAN IS NOT HERE. WE HAVE BOTH FAILED.
YOU ARE WRONG, SHANG-CHI. I, AT LEAST, HAVE NOT YET FAILED ENTIRELY...
...FOR I WAS ALSO SENT TO SLAY YOU!
"HE GUIDES THE NUNCHAKUS WITH DISCIPLINED SKILL, WEAVING A PROMISE OF DEATH THROUGH THE AIR...

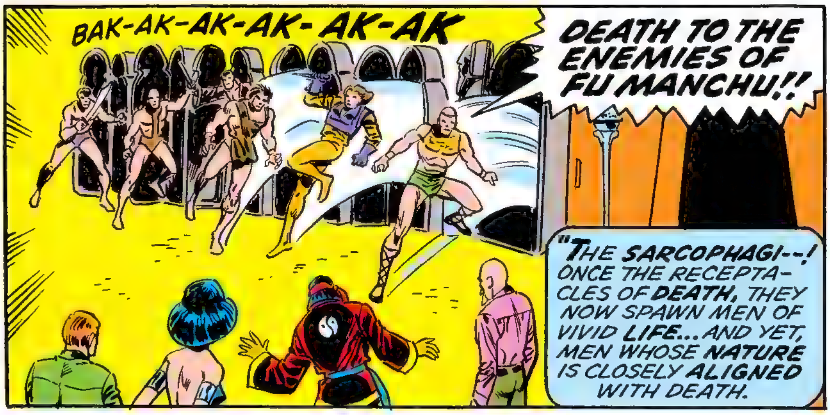

"BUT I WOULD MAKE A LIE--
SKROP!
FUD!
KROK!
SSWIF
FOR THAT, YOU WILL KNOW DEATH, SHANG-CHI.
SHUNT!
BAP!
"--OF HIS PROMISE.
EH?
NOW WHERE DID THOSE--
TLAK
PWOK!
CHUNT!
KRUT!
FWUP
SPLOW!

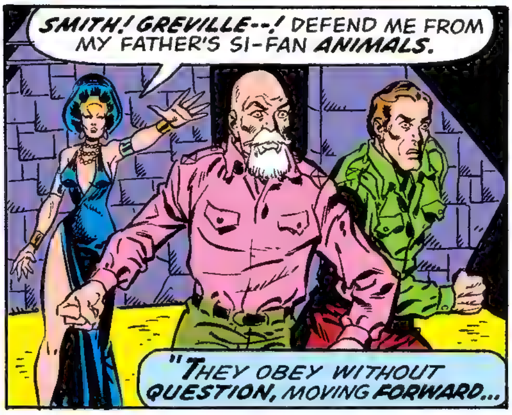

--COME FROM?
I DID NOT FIND THE ENGLISHMAN, SIR DENIS...
SHANG-CHI--!
...BUT I DID FIND A MAP TO THE LOCATION OF--
"--GREVILLE'S ARCHAEOLOGICAL EXCAVATIONS.
THIS MUST BE WHERE FAH LO SUEE TOOK SIR ROBERT--IF IT IS INDEED SETH-AMON'S BURIAL PYRAMID AS HE BELIEVES, SHANG-CHI...
THE EMERALD, ROBERT GREVILLE... THE EMERALD IN THE RING... IS MUCH LIKE MY EYES, IS IT NOT...?
YOU BROUGHT ME TO THIS PYRAMID BECAUSE THE EMERALD WANTED YOU TO DO SO... BECAUSE MY EYES COMMANDED YOU TO DO SO... MY EYES, REACHING OUT TO YOU FROM THE GREEN DEPTHS OF THE EMERALD...
YES... THE EMERALD ...WANTED ME TO... BRING YOU... HERE...
AND NOW THE EMERALD WANTS YOU TO LEAD ME TO THE PHARAOH'S BURIAL CHAMBER... MY EYES COMMAND YOU TO LEAD ME THERE...
...TO THE GOLDEN BEETLE, ROBERT GREVILLE... THE ANCIENT TALISMAN OF POWER...
YES... DOWN THIS CORRIDOR... TO THE BEETLE...
"THE PYRAMID AWAITS US, PALE UNDER THE DESERT MOON...
THERE, SHANG-CHI--A FRESHLY ESCAVATED PIT AT THE BASE OF THE STRUCTURE...
...THE ENTRANCE TO THE CRYPT OF THE PHARAOH SETH-AMON--!
"WE ENTER.

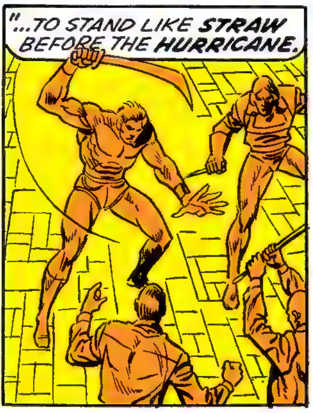

THE CHAMBER... AHEAD... IS THE PHARAOH'S... TOMB...
VERY GOOD, ROBERT GREVILLE...
...MY EYES SHALL BE... KIND...TO YOU...
"SOFT VOICES, ECHOING THROUGH HOLLOW DISTANCE...
NO, SIR DENIS.
EH--?
WE MUST PROCEED DOWN THIS CORRIDOR, INSTEAD.
YOU HAVE DONE WELL, ROBERT GREVILLE. TELL ME OF THIS CRYPT.
THE SIX SARCOPHAGI CONTAIN WIVES AND SERVANTS...WHILE THE SEVENTH HOLDS THE MUMMY OF SETH-AMON HIMSELF...AND THE BEETLE RESTS IN A SMALL BOX...
...NEXT TO HIS CASKET...
IN HERE, THEN, LIES MY DESTINY. IN HERE I WILL FIND--
THE EYES--!!
PRIED FROM THEIR SOCKETS--!
THE RUBY EYES ARE GONE!!

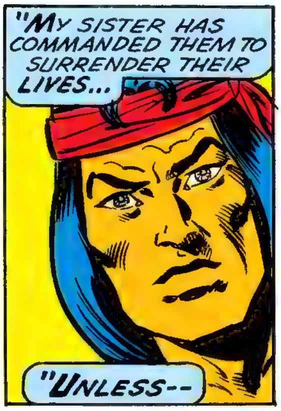

THE SI-FAN ARE *READY?*
YES, O' CELESTIAL ONE.
WHUP WHUP WHUP
BUT *WHO?!* WHO COULD HAVE *TAKEN* THEM--?!
YOU, ROBERT GREVILLE--*YOU* HAVE STOLEN THE BEETLE'S RUBY EYES...
N-NO--! I... I *SWEAR* TO YOU I *DIDN'T*--!
MY WORKERS EXCAVATED THIS CRYPT ONLY *YESTERDAY*--! I... I HAVEN'T EVEN HAD TIME TO FULLY *EXAMINE* THIS CHAMBER--!
I DIDN'T *KNOW* THE EYES WERE GONE! BUT THEY *MUST* BE HERE--AND I'LL *FIND* THEM FOR YOU--I *PROMISE* YOU I WILL--!
THEN YOU WILL BEGIN SEARCHING *NOW,* OR YOU WILL FEEL--
THEN IT'S *TRUE,* DAUGHTER OF HELL... YOU STILL *LIVE*...
...ETERNALLY BEAUTIFUL... ETERNALLY *EVIL*...
WELCOME, NAYLAND SMITH...
IT HAS BEEN A *LONG TIME* SINCE LAST I *SAW* YOU...
YOU'RE STILL...SO *YOUNG*... NOT A DAY OLDER THAN THE LAST TIME I GAZED INTO YOUR HELLISH *EYES*...YOUR BEAUTIFUL *EMERALD* EYES...STILL *ENCHANTING* ...PROMISING *PEACE*...AND PLEASURE BEYOND--
SMITH--! YOU MUST NOT--
GAZE INTO MY EYES *AGAIN,* NAYLAND SMITH... AND *ASK* YOURSELF HOW YOU COULD HAVE *REFUSED* MY *LOVE*...
BUT *KNOW* WITH CERTAINTY THAT YOU CAN *NEVER* REFUSE MY *COMMAND*...FOR YOU ARE *MINE,* NAYLAND SMITH...MINE *AGAIN,* AFTER *FORTY LONG YEARS*...
AND *YOU,* SHANG CHI, LITTLE SPIRIT WHO IS MY *BROTHER*...ARE YOU AFRAID TO *GREET* YOUR SISTER? DO YOU NOT WISH TO *LOOK* UPON THE BEAUTY WHICH IS *MINE*...?
"I MUST *AVERT* MY EYES... MUST NOT *LISTEN* TO--

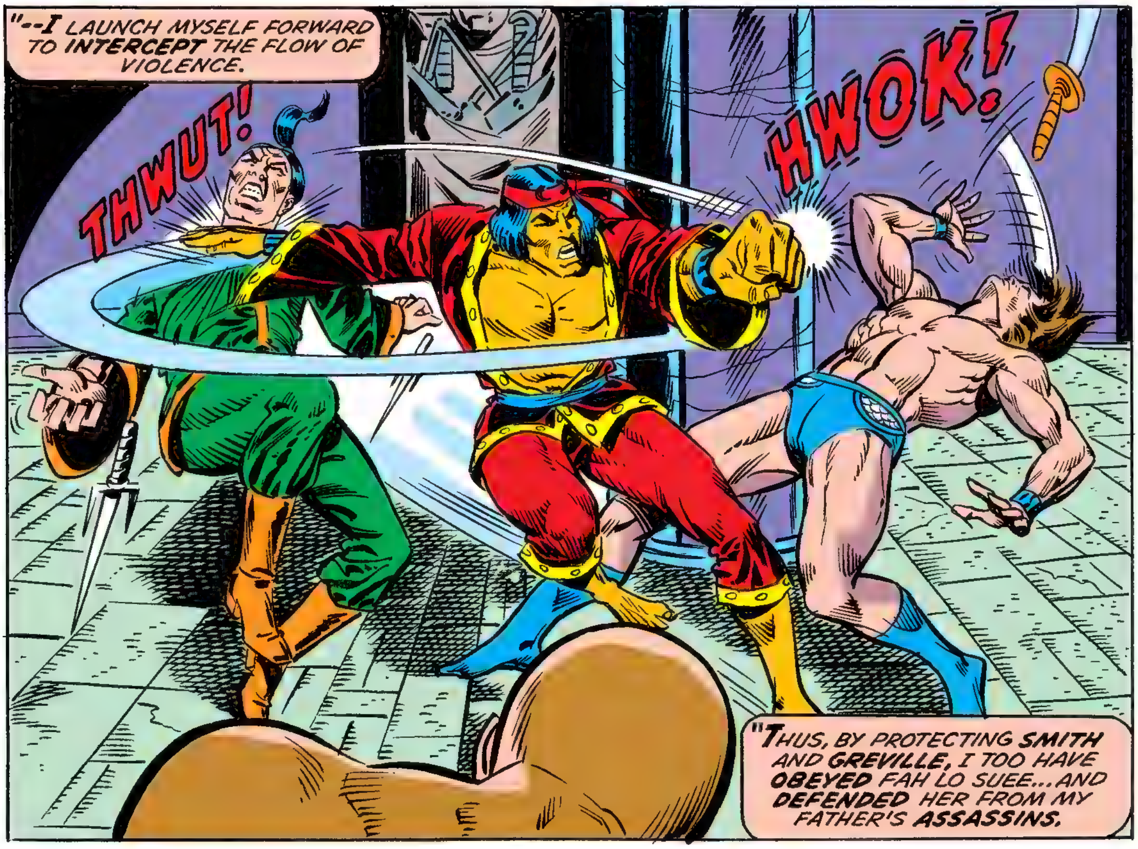

"--CREAKING....?
K-K-K

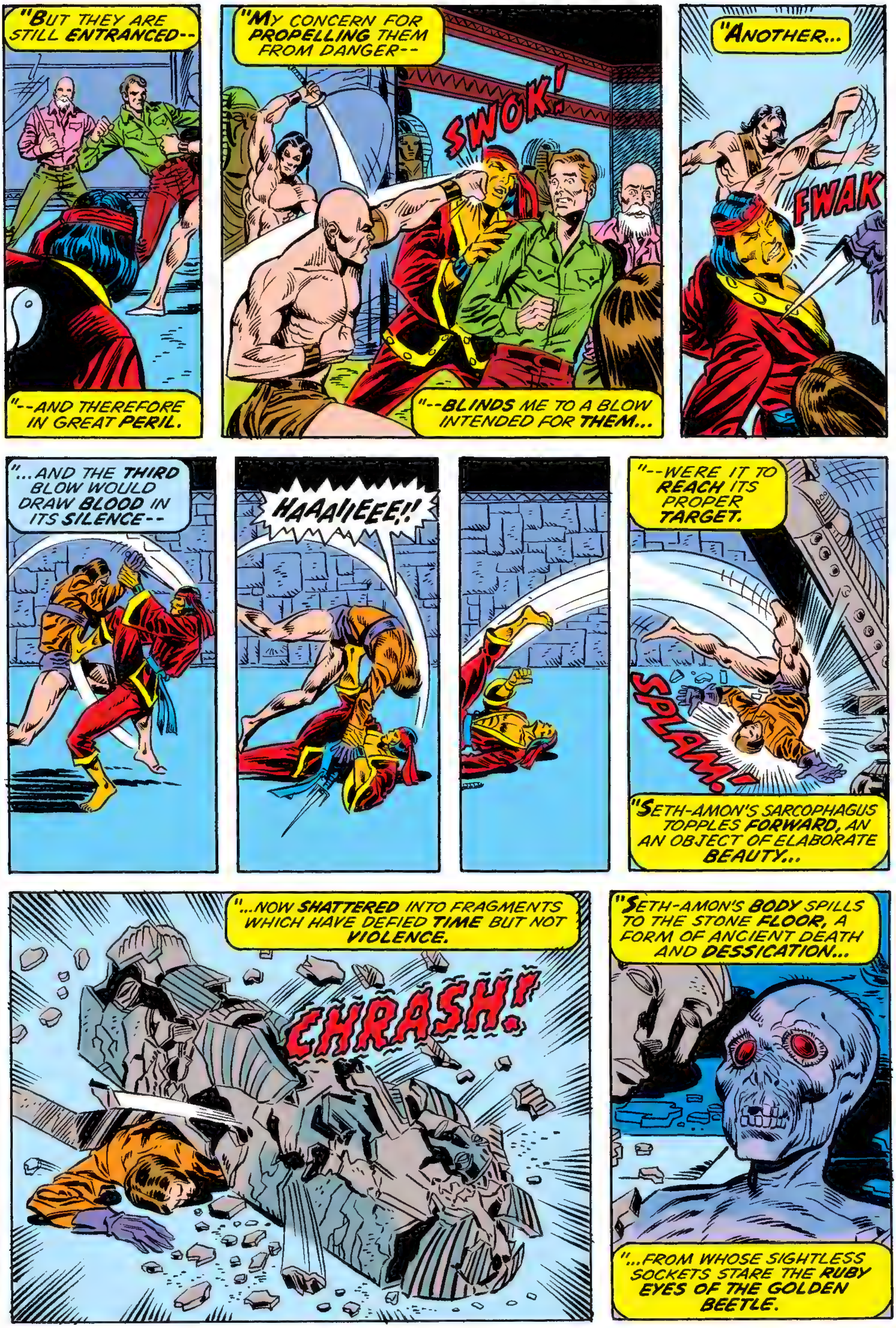

BAK-AK-AK-AK-AK-AK
DEATH TO THE ENEMIES OF FU MANCHU!!
"THE SARCOPHAGI--! ONCE THE RECEPTACLES OF DEATH, THEY NOW SPAWN MEN OF VIVID LIFE... AND YET, MEN WHOSE NATURE IS CLOSELY ALIGNED WITH DEATH.

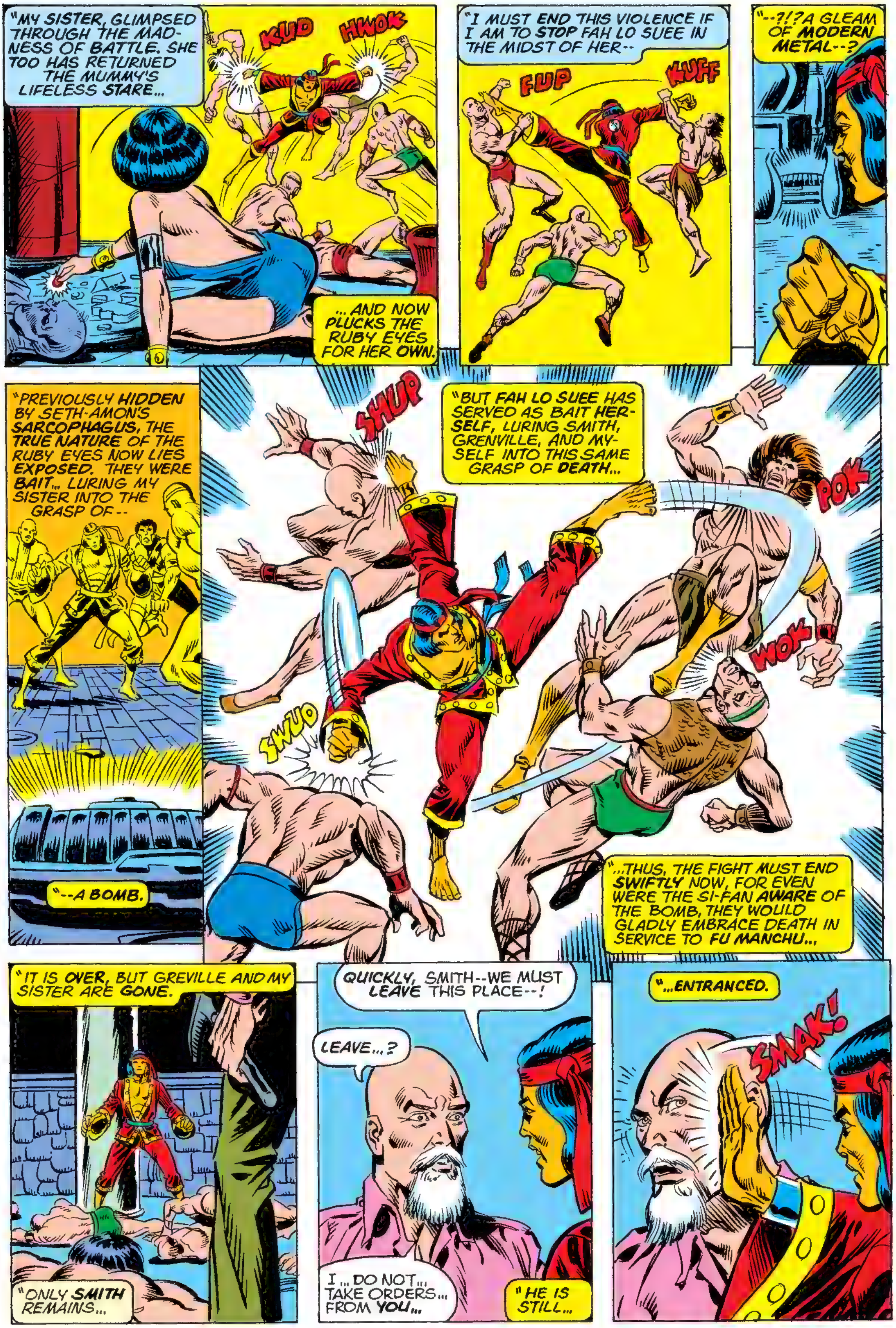

SMITH! GREVILLE--! DEFEND ME FROM MY FATHER'S SI-FAN ANIMALS.
"THEY OBEY WITHOUT QUESTION, MOVING FORWARD...

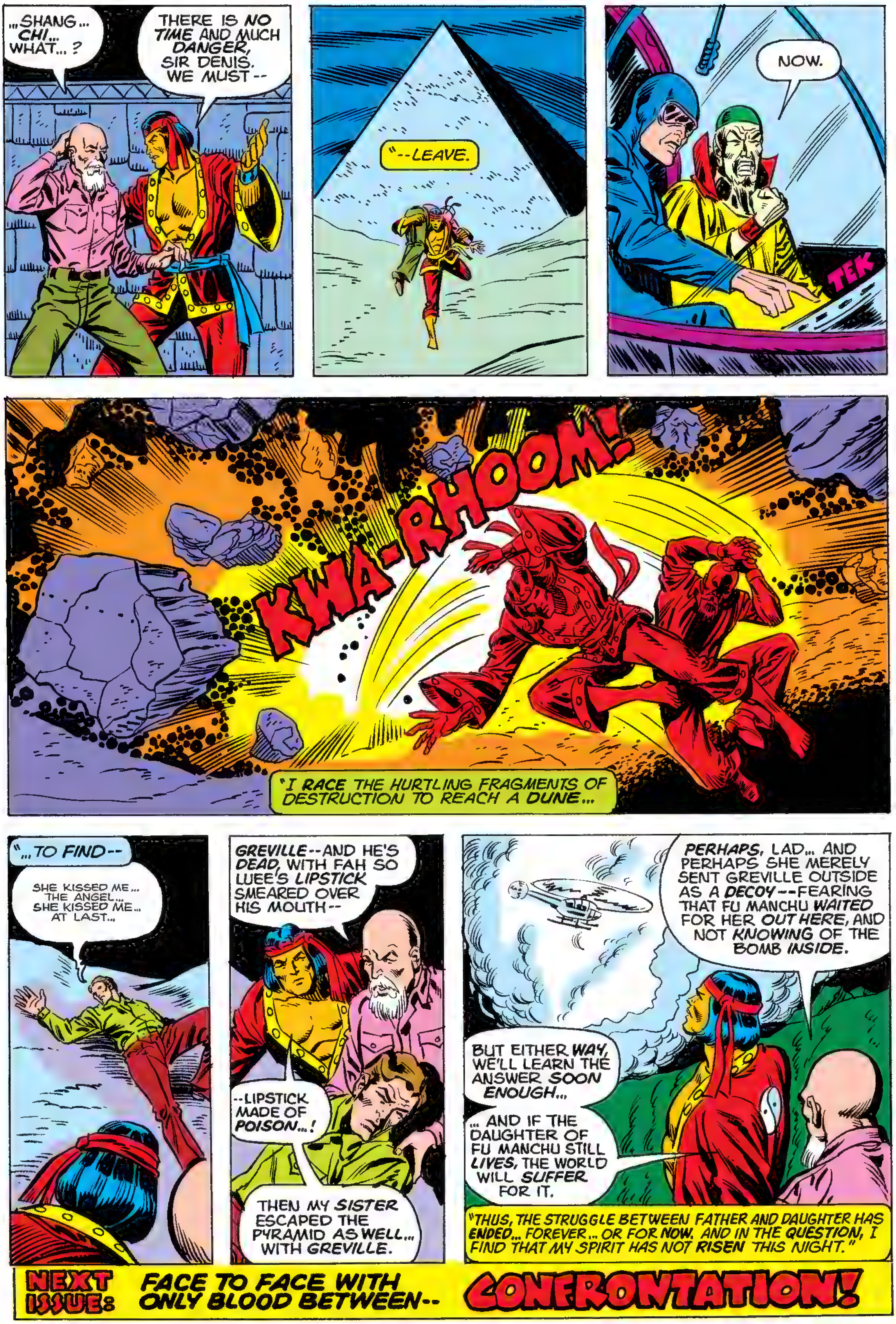

"...TO STAND LIKE STRAW BEFORE THE HURRICANE.

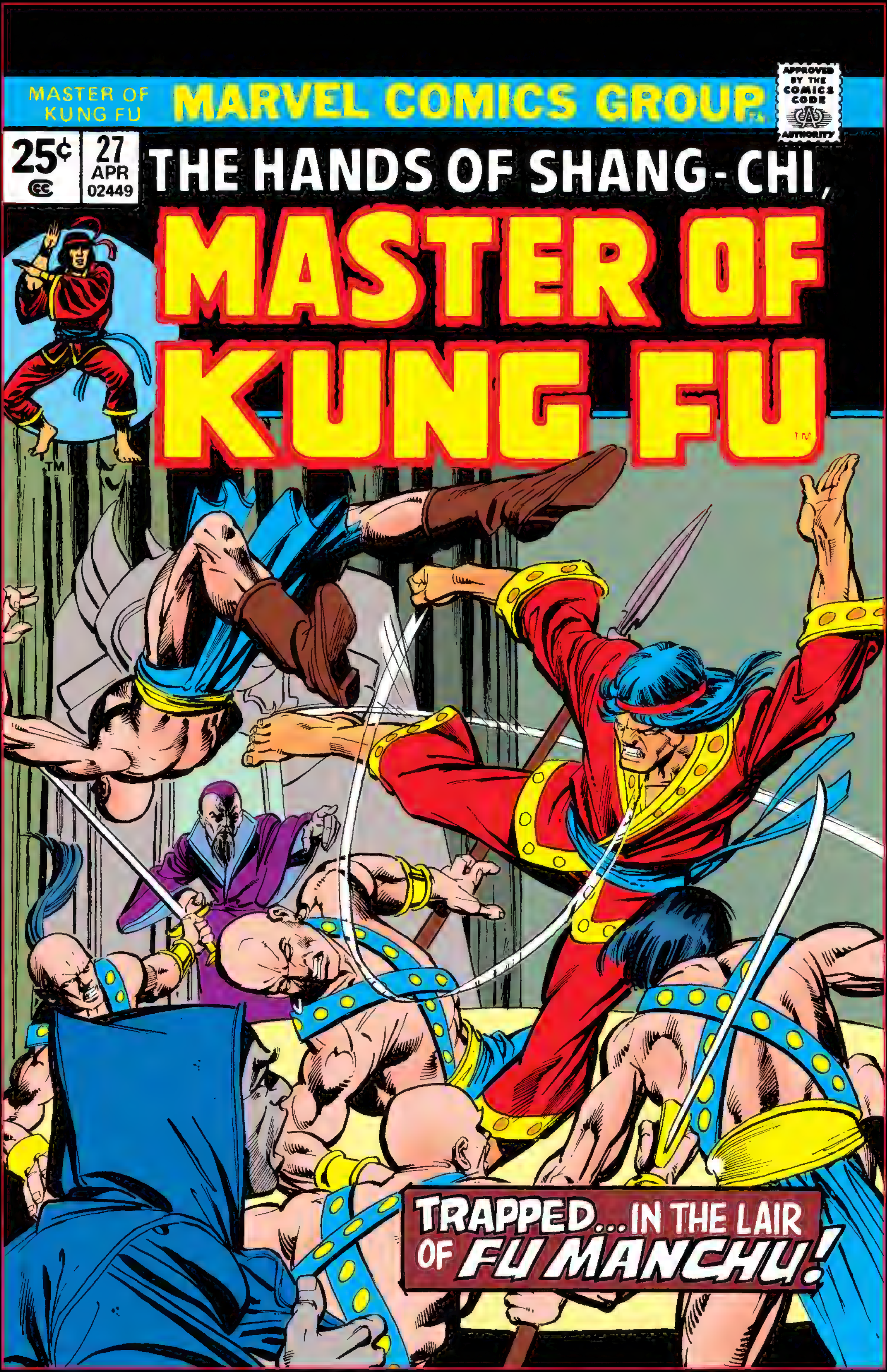

"MY SISTER HAS COMMANDED THEM TO SURRENDER THEIR LIVES...
"UNLESS--


"--I LAUNCH MYSELF FORWARD TO INTERCEPT THE FLOW OF VIOLENCE.
THWUT!
HWOK!
"THUS, BY PROTECTING SMITH AND GREVILLE, I TOO HAVE OBEYED FAH LO SUEE... AND DEFENDED HER FROM MY FATHER'S ASSASSINS.


"BUT THEY ARE STILL ENTRANCED--
"--AND THEREFORE IN GREAT PERIL.
"MY CONCERN FOR PROPELLING THEM FROM DANGER--
SWOK!
"--BLINDS ME TO A BLOW INTENDED FOR THEM...
"ANOTHER...
FWAK
"...AND THE THIRD BLOW WOULD DRAW BLOOD IN ITS SILENCE--
HAAAIIEEE!!
"--WERE IT TO REACH ITS PROPER TARGET.
SPLAM!
"SETH-AMON'S SARCOPHAGUS TOPPLES FORWARD, AN AN OBJECT OF ELABORATE BEAUTY...
"...NOW SHATTERED INTO FRAGMENTS WHICH HAVE DEFIED TIME BUT NOT VIOLENCE.
CHRASH!
"SETH-AMON'S BODY SPILLS TO THE STONE FLOOR, A FORM OF ANCIENT DEATH AND DESSICATION...
"...FROM WHOSE SIGHTLESS SOCKETS STARE THE RUBY EYES OF THE GOLDEN BEETLE.


"MY SISTER, GLIMPSED THROUGH THE MADNESS OF BATTLE. SHE TOO HAS RETURNED THE MUMMY'S LIFELESS STARE...
KUD
HWOK
...AND NOW PLUCKS THE RUBY EYES FOR HER OWN.
"I MUST END THIS VIOLENCE IF I AM TO STOP FAH LO SUEE IN THE MIDST OF HER--
FUP
KUFF
"--?!?A GLEAM OF MODERN METAL--?
"PREVIOUSLY HIDDEN BY SETH-AMON'S SARCOPHAGUS, THE TRUE NATURE OF THE RUBY EYES NOW LIES EXPOSED. THEY WERE BAIT... LURING MY SISTER INTO THE GRASP OF--
"--A BOMB.
SHUP
"BUT FAH LO SUEE HAS SERVED AS BAIT HERSELF, LURING SMITH, GRENVILLE, AND MYSELF INTO THIS SAME GRASP OF DEATH...
POK
WOK
SWUD
"...THUS, THE FIGHT MUST END SWIFTLY NOW, FOR EVEN WERE THE SI-FAN AWARE OF THE BOMB, THEY WOULD GLADLY EMBRACE DEATH IN SERVICE TO FU MANCHU...
"IT IS OVER, BUT GREVILLE AND MY SISTER ARE GONE.
"ONLY SMITH REMAINS...
QUICKLY, SMITH--WE MUST LEAVE THIS PLACE--!
LEAVE...?
I... DO NOT... TAKE ORDERS... FROM YOU...
"HE IS STILL...
"...ENTRANCED.
SMAK!


...SHANG... CHI... WHAT... ?
THERE IS NO TIME AND MUCH DANGER, SIR DENIS. WE MUST --
"--LEAVE.
NOW.
TEK
KWA-RHOOM!
"I RACE THE HURTLING FRAGMENTS OF DESTRUCTION TO REACH A DUNE...
"...TO FIND--
SHE KISSED ME... THE ANGEL... SHE KISSED ME... AT LAST...
GREVILLE--AND HE'S DEAD, WITH FAH LO SUEE'S LIPSTICK SMEARED OVER HIS MOUTH--
--LIPSTICK MADE OF POISON...!
THEN MY SISTER ESCAPED THE PYRAMID AS WELL... WITH GREVILLE.
PERHAPS, LAD... AND PERHAPS SHE MERELY SENT GREVILLE OUTSIDE AS A DECOY--FEARING THAT FU MANCHU WAITED FOR HER OUT HERE, AND NOT KNOWING OF THE BOMB INSIDE.
BUT EITHER WAY, WE'LL LEARN THE ANSWER SOON ENOUGH...
... AND IF THE DAUGHTER OF FU MANCHU STILL LIVES, THE WORLD WILL SUFFER FOR IT.
"THUS, THE STRUGGLE BETWEEN FATHER AND DAUGHTER HAS ENDED... FOREVER... OR FOR NOW. AND IN THE QUESTION, I FIND THAT MY SPIRIT HAS NOT RISEN THIS NIGHT."
NEXT ISSUE: FACE TO FACE WITH ONLY BLOOD BETWEEN-- CONFRONTATION!


MASTER OF KUNG FU
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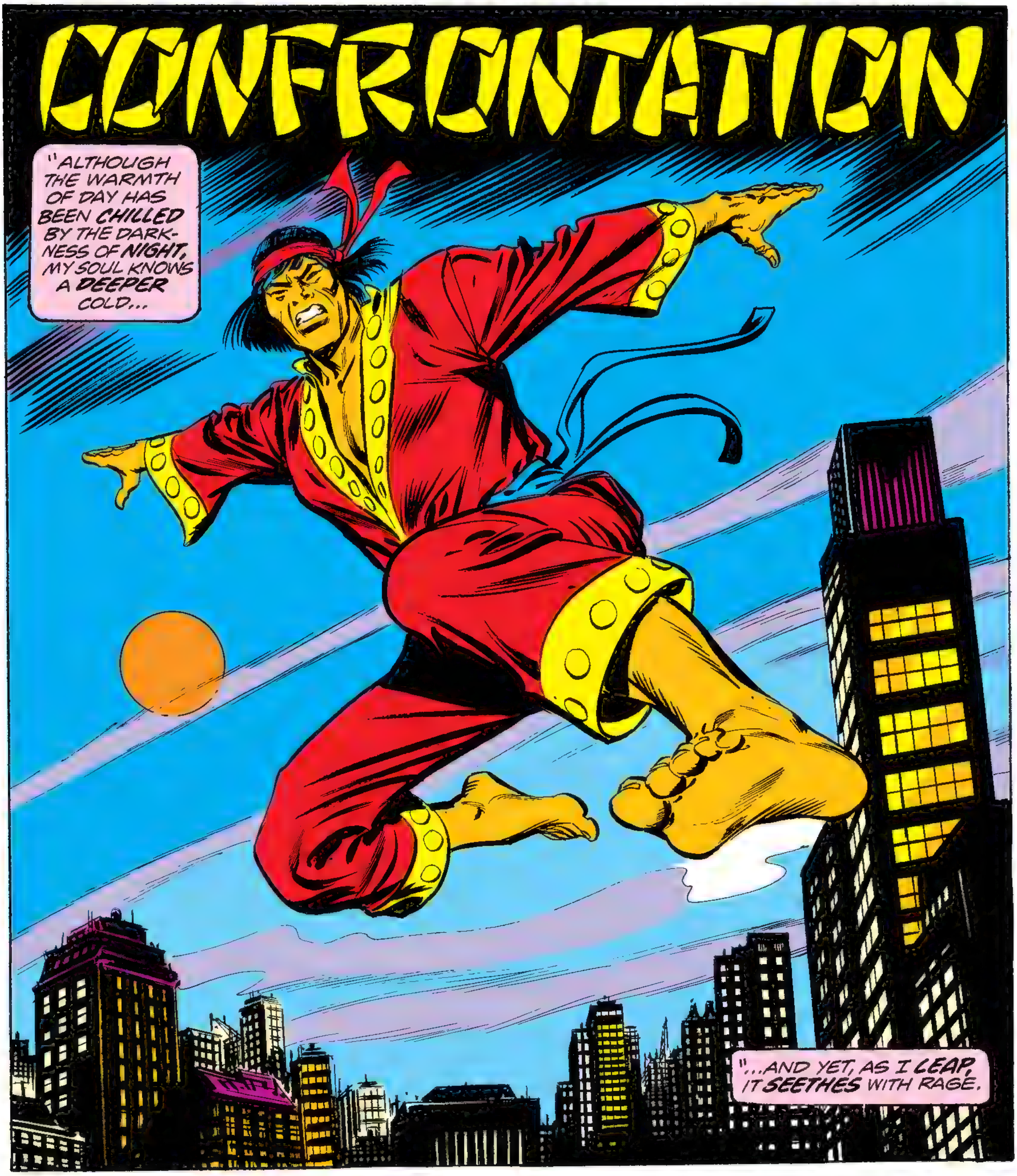
THE HANDS OF SHANG-CHI,
MASTER OF KUNG FU
TRAPPED... IN THE LAIR OF FU MANCHU!

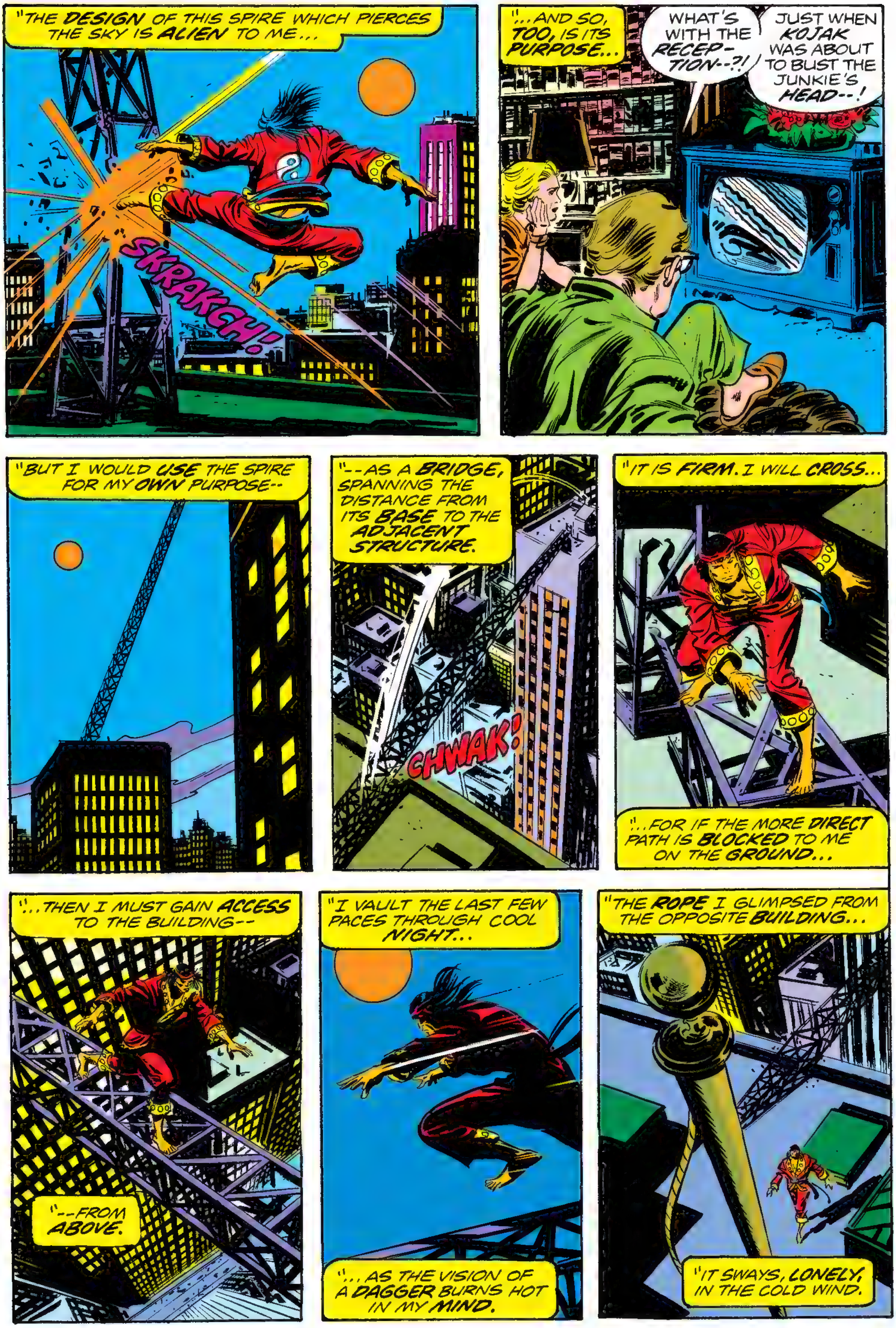
"Call me Shang-Chi, as my *father* did, when he raised me and molded my mind and my body in the vacuum of his Honan, China retreat. I learned many things from my father: That my name means "The Rising and Advancing of a Spirit," that my body could be forged into a living weapon through the discipline of kung fu, and that it might be used for the murder of a man called Dr. Petrie.

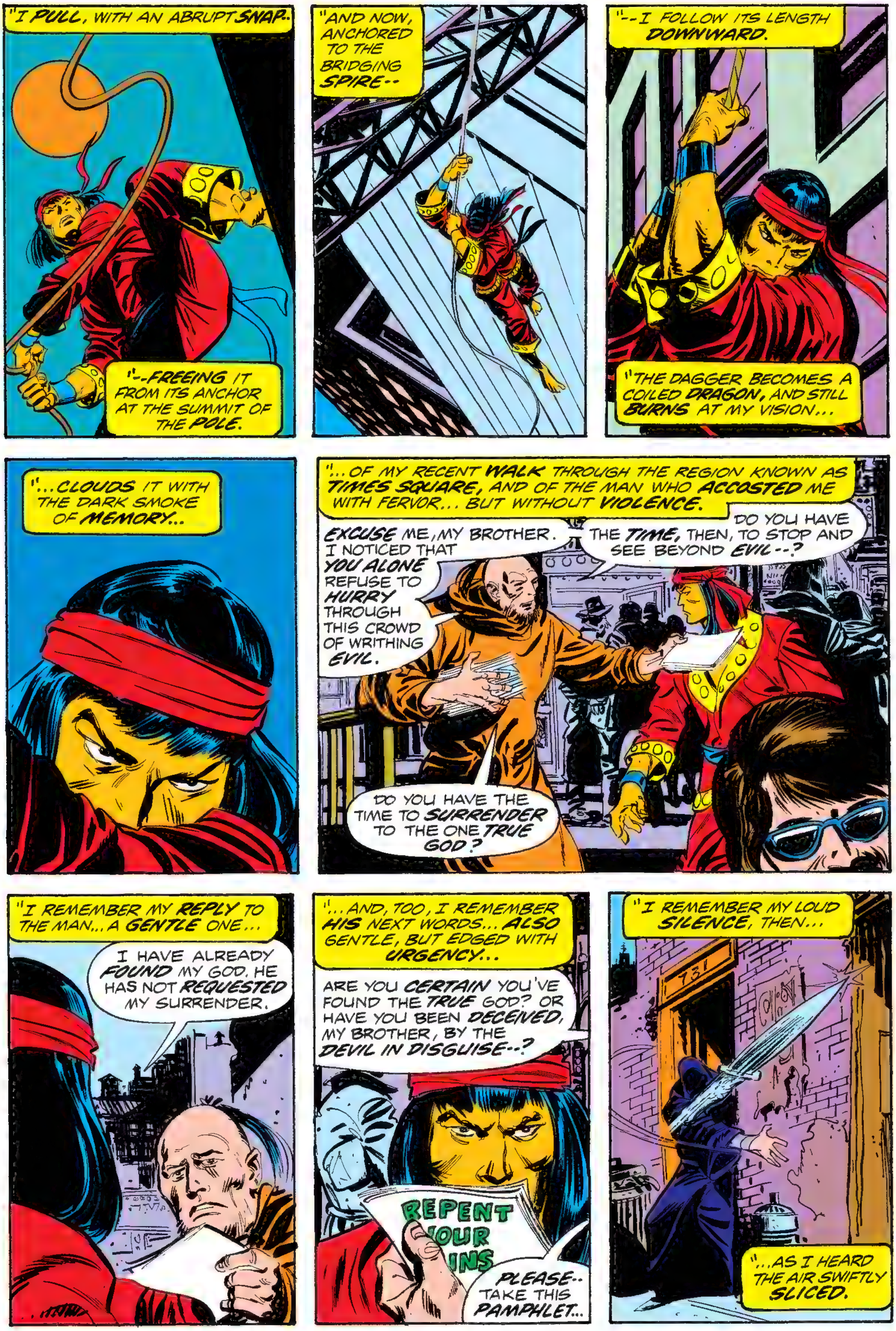
"Since then, I have learned that my father is **Dr. Fu Manchu** the most insidiously evil man on earth... and that to ***honor*** him would bring nothing but ***dishonor*** to the spirit of my ***name***."

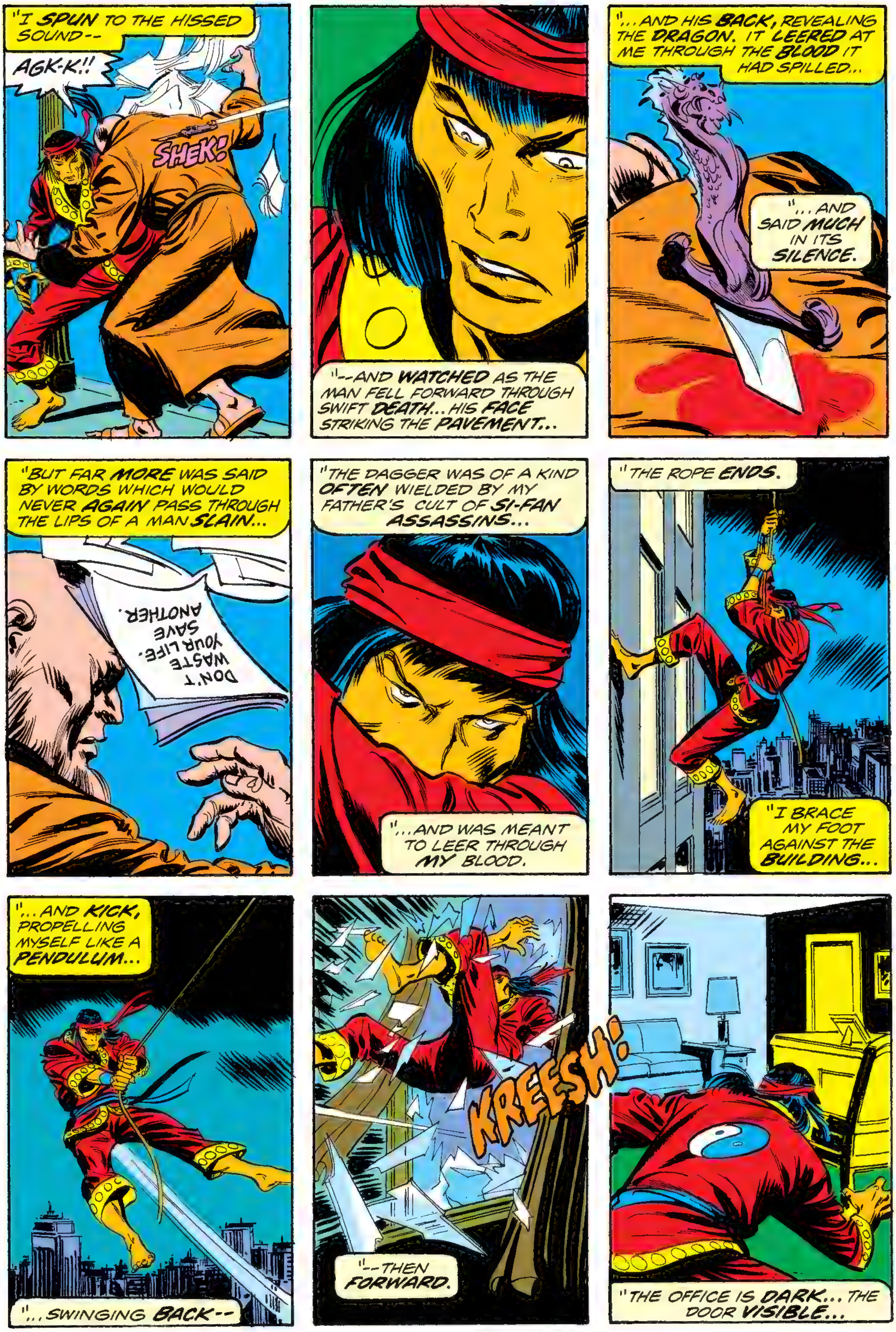
Stan Lee PRESENTS: MASTER OF KUNG FU!™

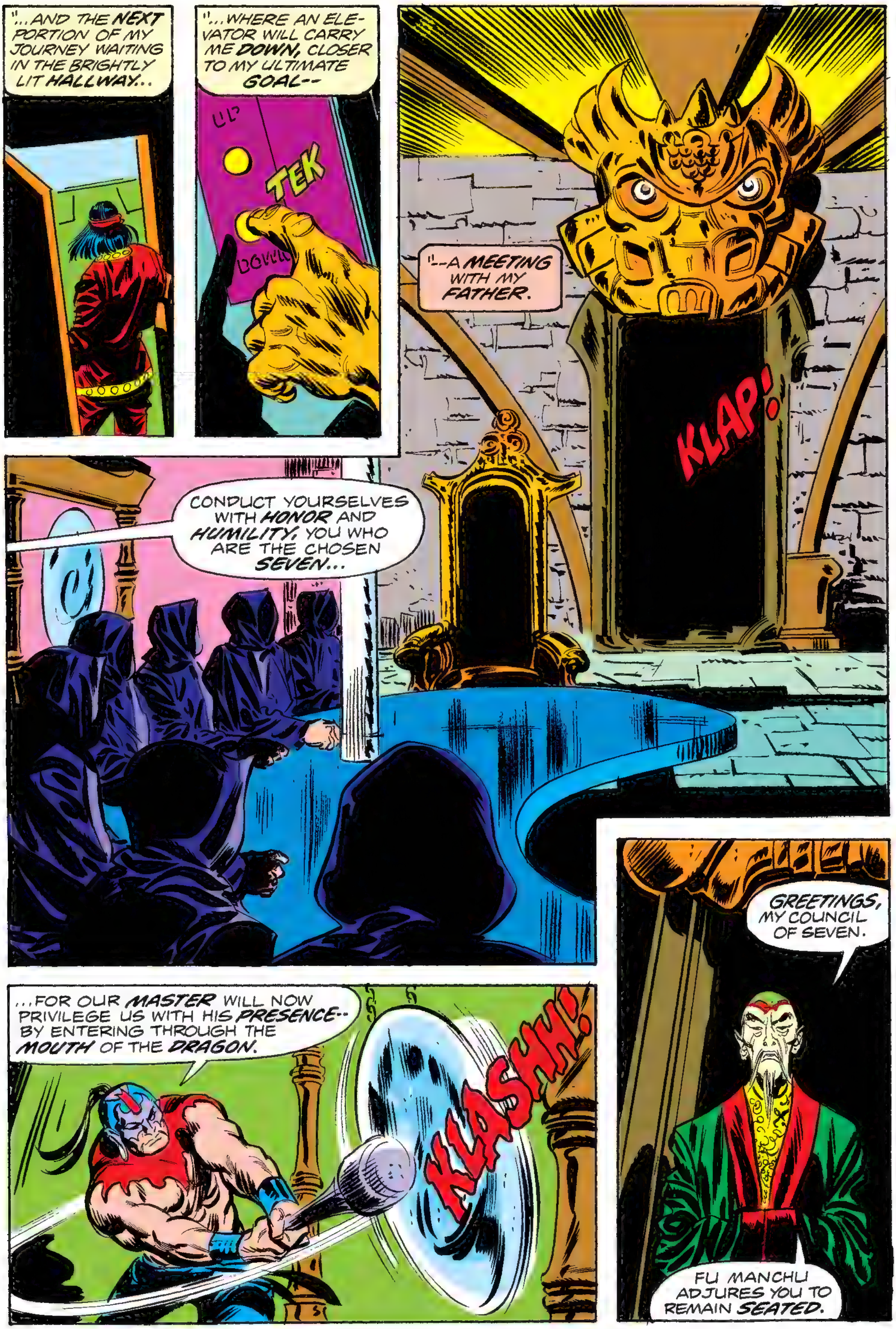
DOUG MOENCH WRITER / JOHN BUSCEMA ARTIST / FRANK SPRINGER INKER / JOHN COSTANZA, letterer / JANICE COHEN, colorist / LEN WEIN EDITOR

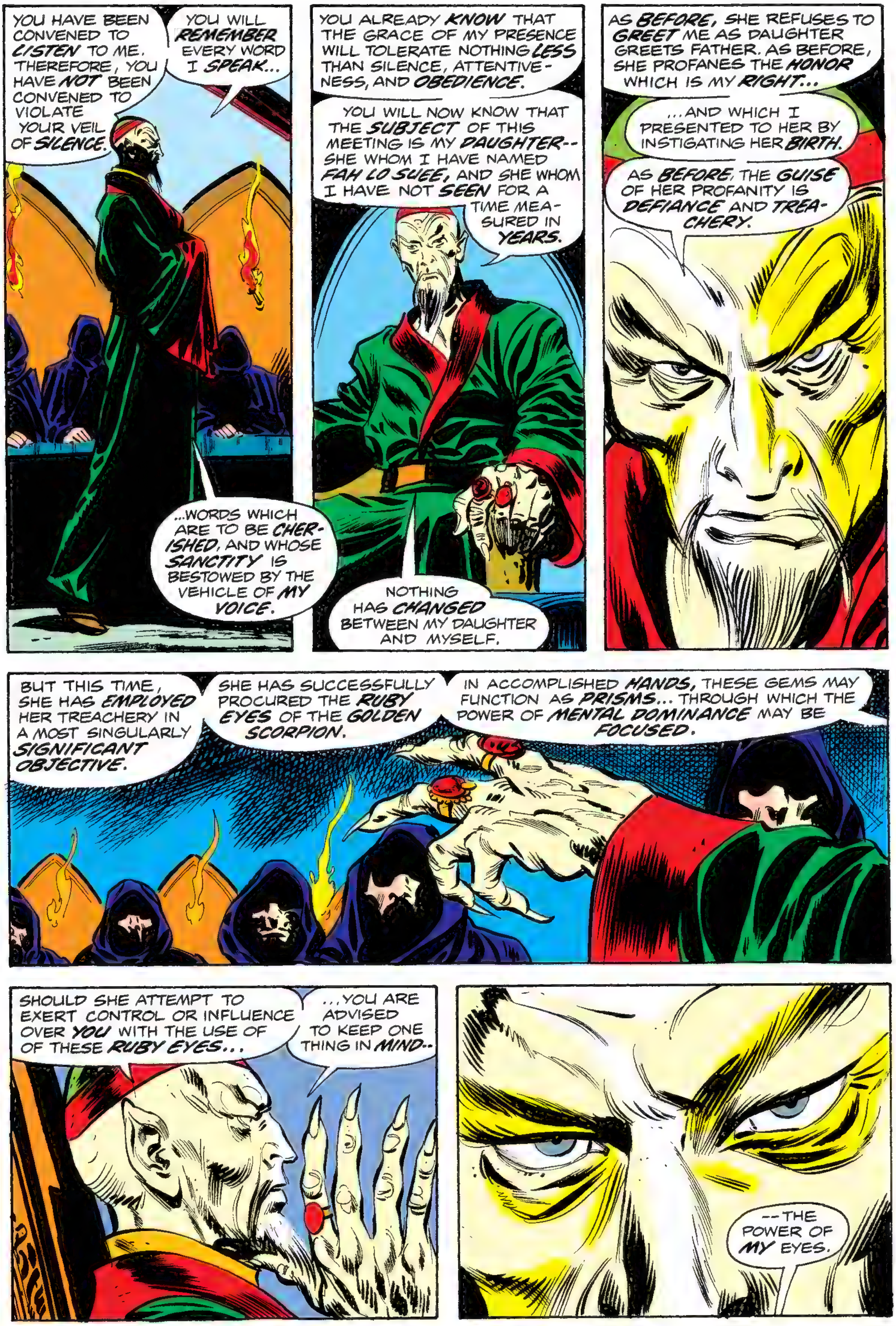

CONFRONTATION
"ALTHOUGH THE WARMTH OF DAY HAS BEEN CHILLED BY THE DARKNESS OF NIGHT, MY SOUL KNOWS A DEEPER COLD...
"...AND YET, AS I LEAP, IT SEETHES WITH RAGE.

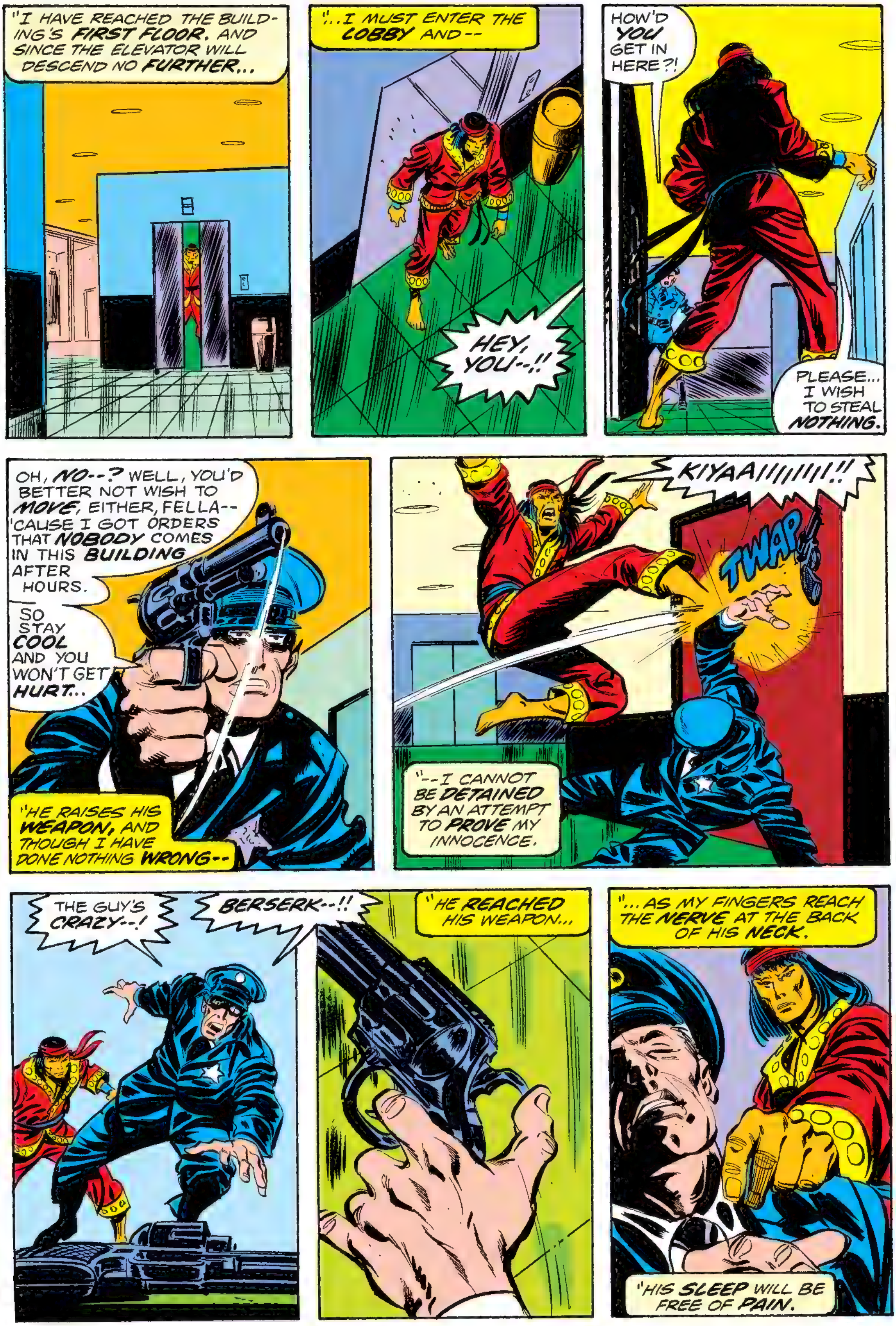

"THE DESIGN OF THIS SPIRE WHICH PIERCES THE SKY IS ALIEN TO ME...
SKRAKCH!
"...AND SO, TOO, IS ITS PURPOSE...
WHAT'S WITH THE RECEPTION--?!
JUST WHEN KOJAK WAS ABOUT TO BUST THE JUNKIE'S HEAD--!
"BUT I WOULD USE THE SPIRE FOR MY OWN PURPOSE--
"--AS A BRIDGE, SPANNING THE DISTANCE FROM ITS BASE TO THE ADJACENT STRUCTURE.
CHWAK!
"IT IS FIRM. I WILL CROSS...
"...FOR IF THE MORE DIRECT PATH IS BLOCKED TO ME ON THE GROUND...
"...THEN I MUST GAIN ACCESS TO THE BUILDING--
"--FROM ABOVE.
"I VAULT THE LAST FEW PACES THROUGH COOL NIGHT...
"...AS THE VISION OF A DAGGER BURNS HOT IN MY MIND.
"THE ROPE I GLIMPSED FROM THE OPPOSITE BUILDING...
"IT SWAYS, LONELY, IN THE COLD WIND.

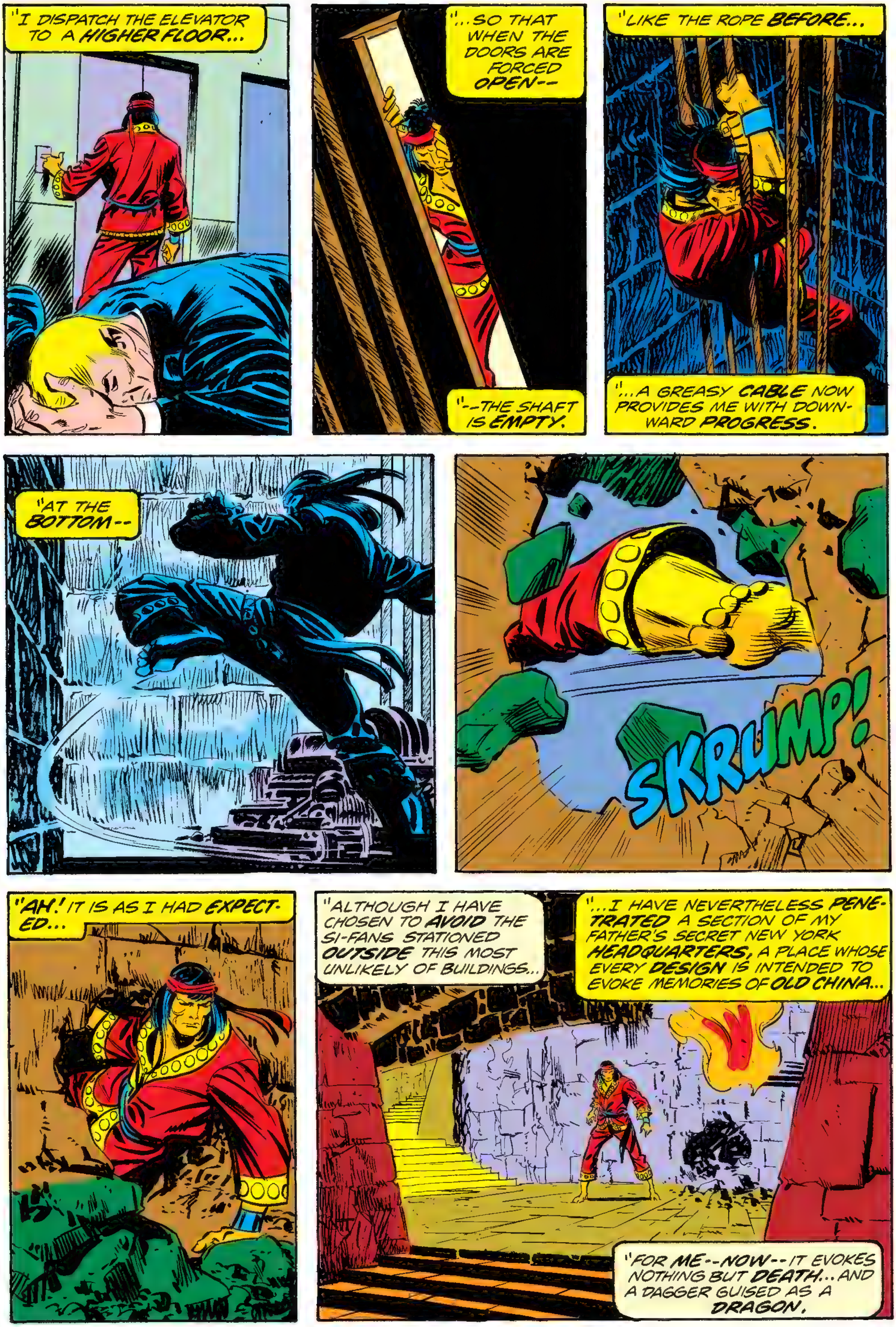

"I PULL, WITH AN ABRUPT SNAP..
"--FREEING IT FROM ITS ANCHOR AT THE SUMMIT OF THE POLE.
"AND NOW, ANCHORED TO THE BRIDGING SPIRE--
"--I FOLLOW ITS LENGTH DOWNWARD.
"THE DAGGER BECOMES A COILED DRAGON, AND STILL BURNS AT MY VISION...
"...CLOUDS IT WITH THE DARK SMOKE OF MEMORY...
"...OF MY RECENT WALK THROUGH THE REGION KNOWN AS TIMES SQUARE, AND OF THE MAN WHO ACCOSTED ME WITH FERVOR... BUT WITHOUT VIOLENCE.
EXCUSE ME, MY BROTHER. I NOTICED THAT YOU ALONE REFUSE TO HURRY THROUGH THIS CROWD OF WRITHING EVIL.
DO YOU HAVE THE TIME, THEN, TO STOP AND SEE BEYOND EVIL--?
DO YOU HAVE THE TIME TO SURRENDER TO THE ONE TRUE GOD?
"I REMEMBER MY REPLY TO THE MAN... A GENTLE ONE...
I HAVE ALREADY FOUND MY GOD. HE HAS NOT REQUESTED MY SURRENDER.
"...AND, TOO, I REMEMBER HIS NEXT WORDS... ALSO GENTLE, BUT EDGED WITH URGENCY...
ARE YOU CERTAIN YOU'VE FOUND THE TRUE GOD? OR HAVE YOU BEEN DECEIVED, MY BROTHER, BY THE DEVIL IN DISGUISE--?
REPENT YOUR INS
PLEASE.. TAKE THIS PAMPHLET...
"I REMEMBER MY LOUD SILENCE, THEN...
731
"...AS I HEARD THE AIR SWIFTLY SLICED.

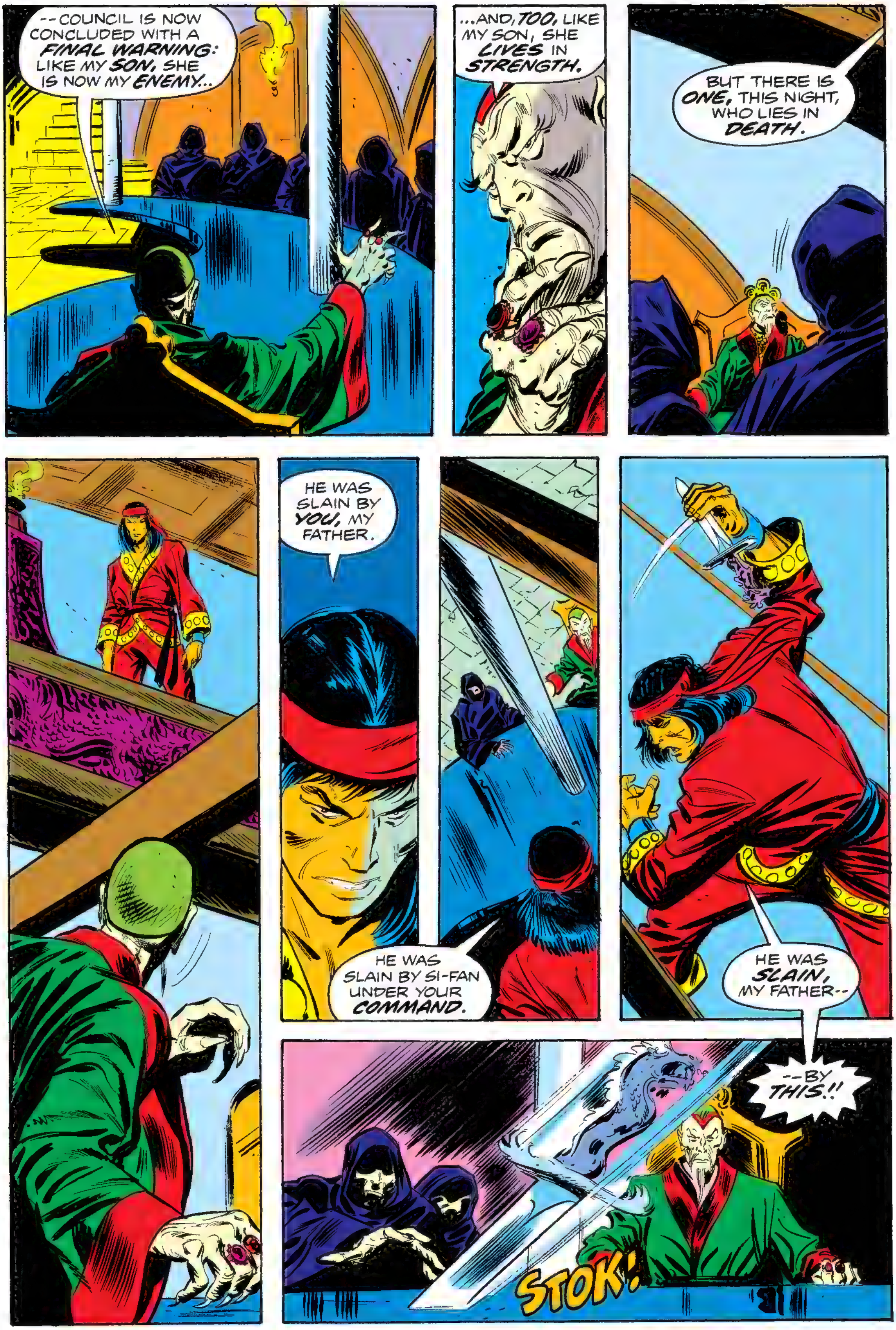

"I SPUN TO THE HISSED SOUND--
AGK-K!!
SHEK!
"--AND WATCHED AS THE MAN FELL FORWARD THROUGH SWIFT DEATH... HIS FACE STRIKING THE PAVEMENT...
"...AND HIS BACK, REVEALING THE DRAGON. IT LEERED AT ME THROUGH THE BLOOD IT HAD SPILLED...
"...AND SAID MUCH IN ITS SILENCE.
"BUT FAR MORE WAS SAID BY WORDS WHICH WOULD NEVER AGAIN PASS THROUGH THE LIPS OF A MAN SLAIN...
DON'T WASTE YOUR LIFE. SAVE ANOTHER.
"THE DAGGER WAS OF A KIND OFTEN WIELDED BY MY FATHER'S CULT OF SI-FAN ASSASSINS...
"...AND WAS MEANT TO LEER THROUGH MY BLOOD.
"THE ROPE ENDS.
"I BRACE MY FOOT AGAINST THE BUILDING...
"...AND KICK, PROPELLING MYSELF LIKE A PENDULUM...
"...SWINGING BACK--
KREESH!
"--THEN FORWARD.
"THE OFFICE IS DARK... THE DOOR VISIBLE...

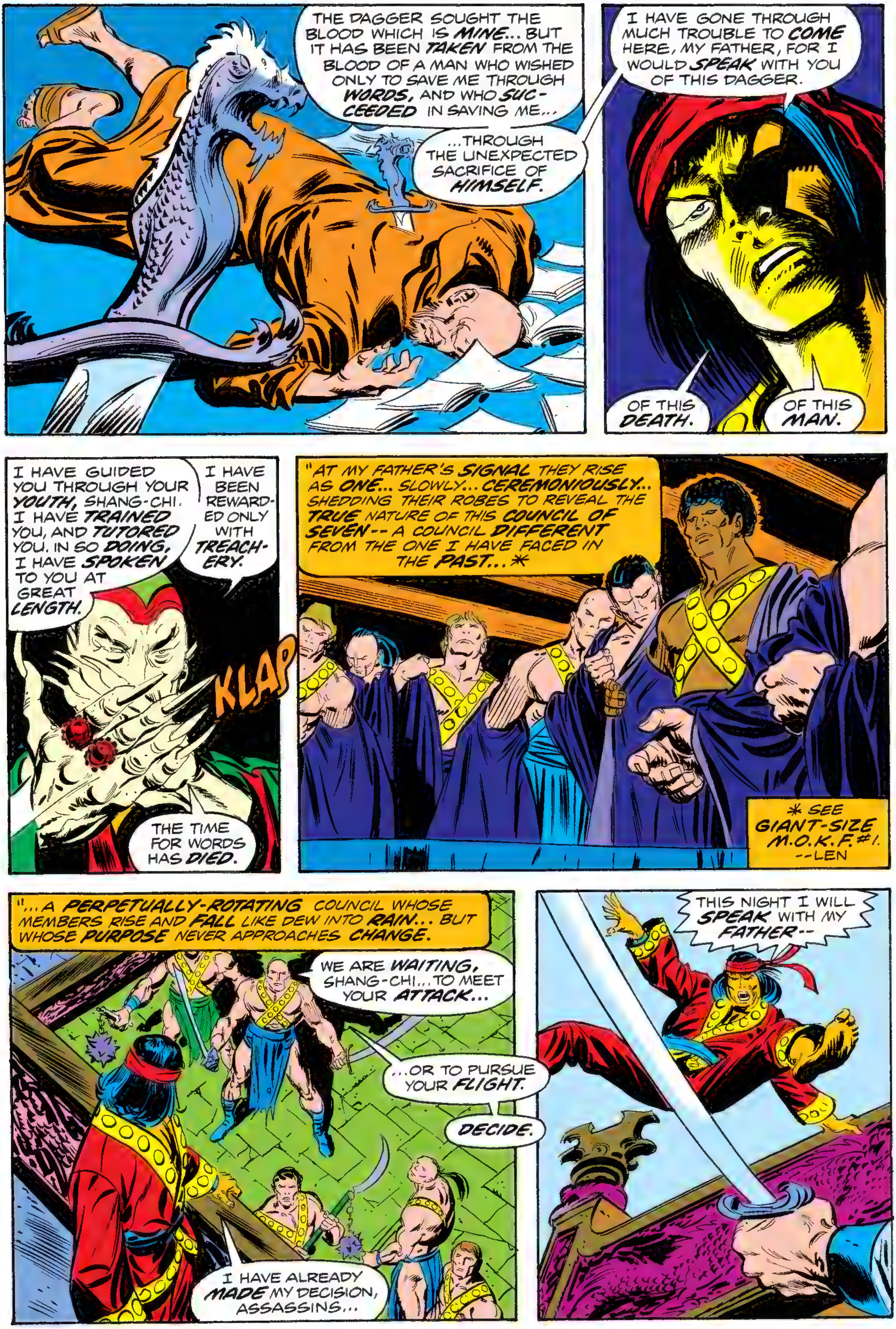

"...AND THE NEXT PORTION OF MY JOURNEY WAITING IN THE BRIGHTLY LIT HALLWAY...
"...WHERE AN ELEVATOR WILL CARRY ME DOWN, CLOSER TO MY ULTIMATE GOAL--
UP
TEK
DOWN
"--A MEETING WITH MY FATHER.
KLAP!
CONDUCT YOURSELVES WITH HONOR AND HUMILITY, YOU WHO ARE THE CHOSEN SEVEN...
...FOR OUR MASTER WILL NOW PRIVILEGE US WITH HIS PRESENCE-- BY ENTERING THROUGH THE MOUTH OF THE DRAGON.
KLASHH!
GREETINGS, MY COUNCIL OF SEVEN.
FU MANCHU ADJURES YOU TO REMAIN SEATED.

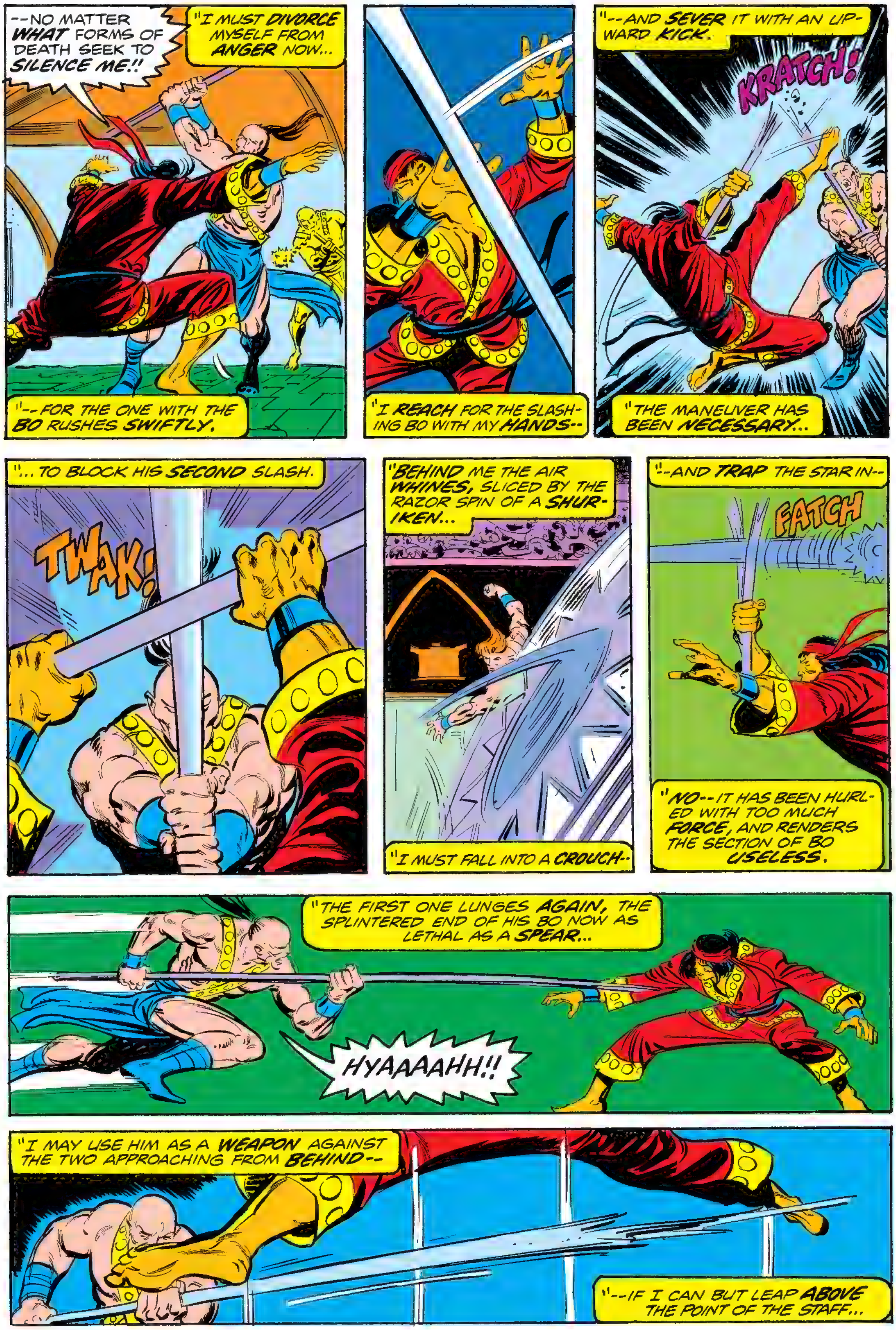

YOU HAVE BEEN CONVENED TO *LISTEN* TO ME. THEREFORE, YOU HAVE *NOT* BEEN CONVENED TO VIOLATE YOUR VEIL OF *SILENCE*.
YOU WILL *REMEMBER* EVERY WORD I *SPEAK*...
...WORDS WHICH ARE TO BE *CHERISHED*, AND WHOSE *SANCTITY* IS BESTOWED BY THE VEHICLE OF *MY VOICE*.
YOU ALREADY *KNOW* THAT THE GRACE OF MY PRESENCE WILL TOLERATE NOTHING *LESS* THAN SILENCE, ATTENTIVENESS, AND *OBEDIENCE*.
YOU WILL NOW KNOW THAT THE *SUBJECT* OF THIS MEETING IS MY *DAUGHTER*-- SHE WHOM I HAVE NAMED *FAH LO SUEE*, AND SHE WHOM I HAVE NOT *SEEN* FOR A TIME MEASURED IN *YEARS*.
NOTHING HAS *CHANGED* BETWEEN MY DAUGHTER AND MYSELF.
AS *BEFORE*, SHE REFUSES TO *GREET* ME AS DAUGHTER GREETS FATHER. AS BEFORE, SHE PROFANES THE *HONOR* WHICH IS MY *RIGHT*...
...AND WHICH I PRESENTED TO HER BY INSTIGATING HER *BIRTH*.
AS *BEFORE*, THE *GUISE* OF HER PROFANITY IS *DEFIANCE* AND *TREACHERY*.
BUT THIS TIME, SHE HAS *EMPLOYED* HER TREACHERY IN A MOST SINGULARLY *SIGNIFICANT OBJECTIVE*.
SHE HAS SUCCESSFULLY PROCURED THE *RUBY EYES* OF THE *GOLDEN SCORPION*.
IN ACCOMPLISHED *HANDS*, THESE GEMS MAY FUNCTION AS *PRISMS*... THROUGH WHICH THE POWER OF *MENTAL DOMINANCE* MAY BE *FOCUSED*.
SHOULD SHE ATTEMPT TO EXERT CONTROL OR INFLUENCE OVER *YOU* WITH THE USE OF OF THESE *RUBY EYES*...
...YOU ARE ADVISED TO KEEP ONE THING IN *MIND*--
--THE POWER OF *MY* EYES.

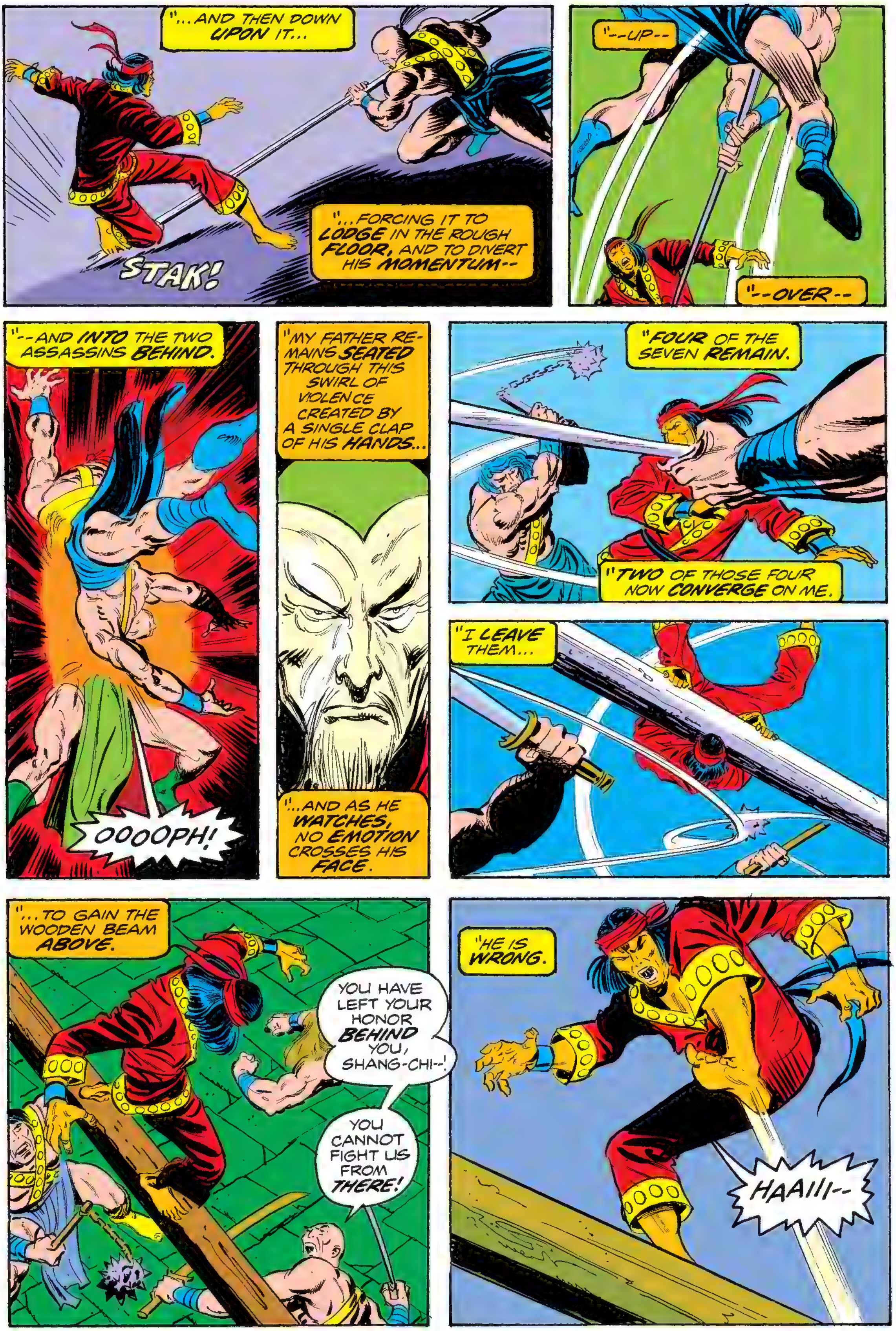

"I HAVE REACHED THE BUILDING'S **FIRST FLOOR.** AND SINCE THE ELEVATOR WILL DESCEND NO **FURTHER...**
"...I MUST ENTER THE **LOBBY** AND--
HEY, YOU--!!
HOW'D **YOU** GET IN HERE?!
PLEASE... I WISH TO STEAL **NOTHING.**
OH, **NO--?** WELL, YOU'D BETTER NOT WISH TO **MOVE,** EITHER, FELLA-- 'CAUSE I GOT ORDERS THAT **NOBODY** COMES IN THIS **BUILDING** AFTER HOURS.
SO STAY **COOL** AND YOU WON'T GET **HURT...**
"HE RAISES HIS **WEAPON,** AND THOUGH I HAVE DONE NOTHING **WRONG--**
KIYAAI!!!!!!!!!
TWAP
"--I CANNOT BE **DETAINED** BY AN ATTEMPT TO **PROVE** MY INNOCENCE.
THE GUY'S **CRAZY--!**
BERSERK--!!
"HE **REACHED** HIS WEAPON...
"...AS MY FINGERS REACH THE **NERVE** AT THE BACK OF HIS **NECK.**
"HIS **SLEEP** WILL BE FREE OF **PAIN.**

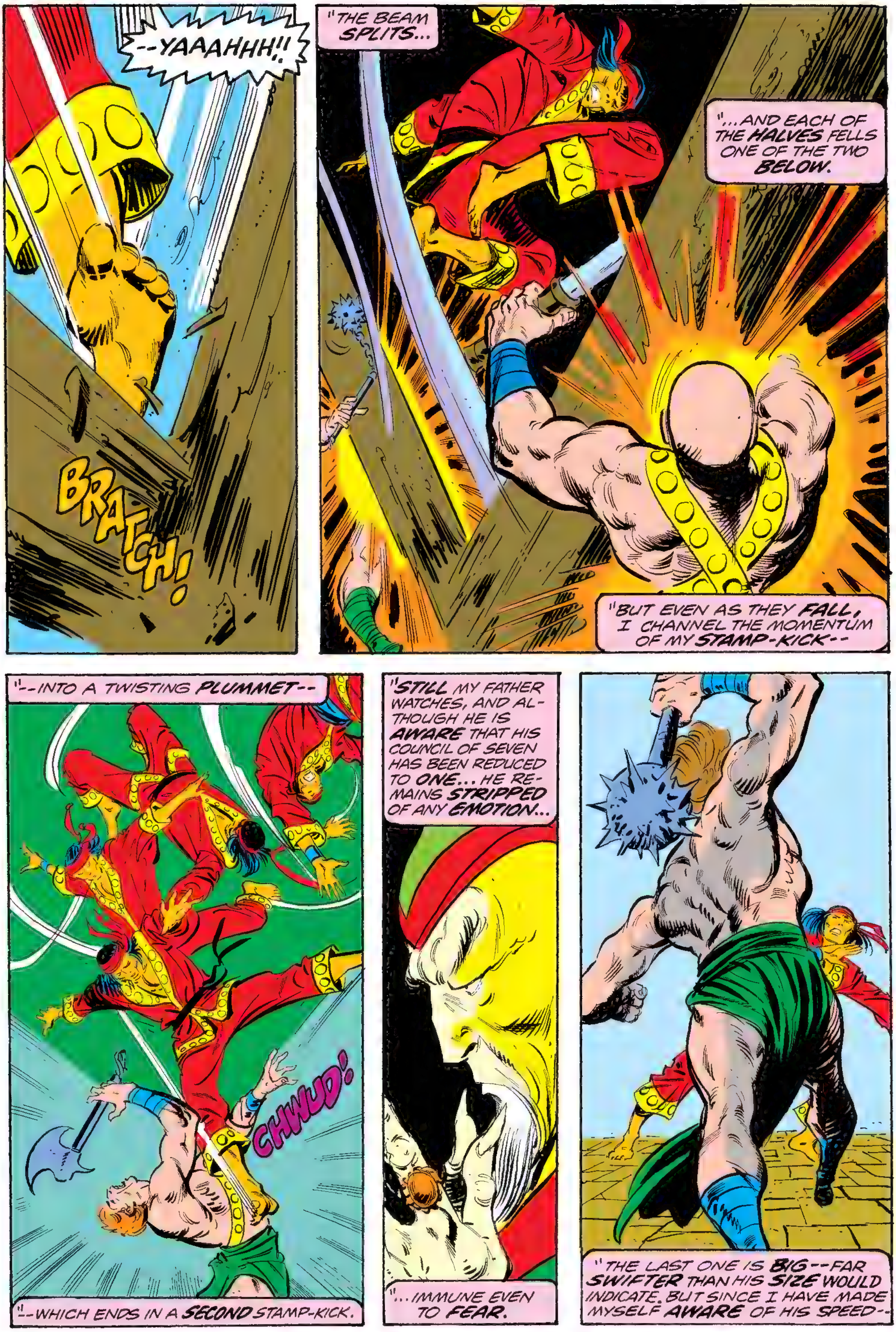

"I DISPATCH THE ELEVATOR TO A HIGHER FLOOR...
"...SO THAT WHEN THE DOORS ARE FORCED OPEN--
"--THE SHAFT IS EMPTY.
"LIKE THE ROPE BEFORE...
"...A GREASY CABLE NOW PROVIDES ME WITH DOWNWARD PROGRESS.
"AT THE BOTTOM--
SKRUMP!
"AH! IT IS AS I HAD EXPECTED...
"ALTHOUGH I HAVE CHOSEN TO AVOID THE SI-FANS STATIONED OUTSIDE THIS MOST UNLIKELY OF BUILDINGS...
"...I HAVE NEVERTHELESS PENETRATED A SECTION OF MY FATHER'S SECRET NEW YORK HEADQUARTERS, A PLACE WHOSE EVERY DESIGN IS INTENDED TO EVOKE MEMORIES OF OLD CHINA...
"FOR ME--NOW--IT EVOKES NOTHING BUT DEATH...AND A DAGGER GUISED AS A DRAGON.

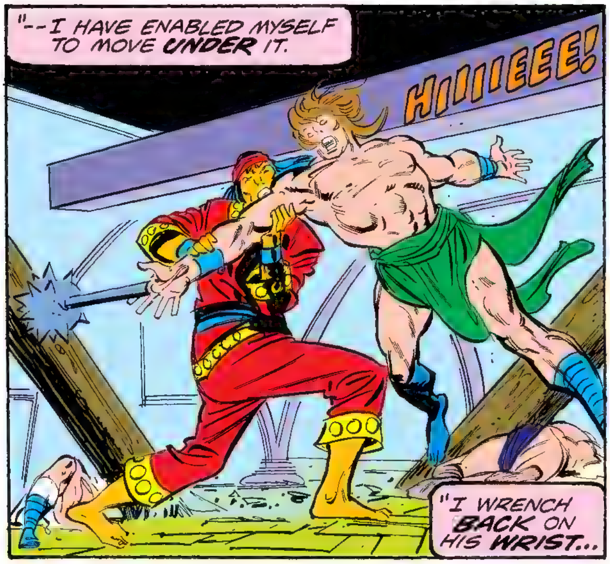

--COUNCIL IS NOW CONCLUDED WITH A FINAL WARNING: LIKE MY SON, SHE IS NOW MY ENEMY...
...AND, TOO, LIKE MY SON, SHE LIVES IN STRENGTH.
BUT THERE IS ONE, THIS NIGHT, WHO LIES IN DEATH.
HE WAS SLAIN BY YOU, MY FATHER.
HE WAS SLAIN BY SI-FAN UNDER YOUR COMMAND.
HE WAS SLAIN, MY FATHER--
--BY THIS!!
STOK!

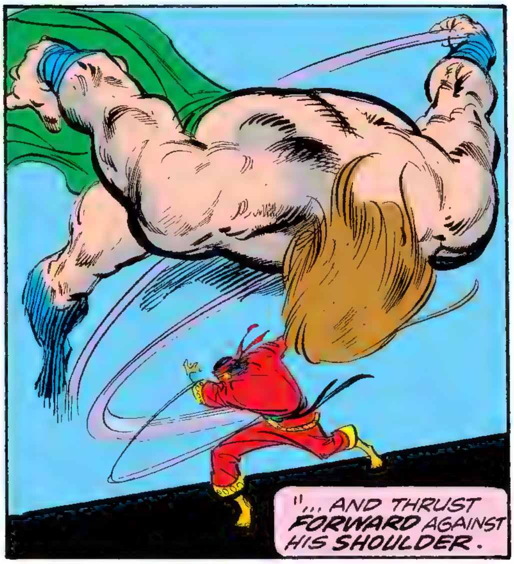

THE DAGGER SOUGHT THE BLOOD WHICH IS *MINE*... BUT IT HAS BEEN *TAKEN* FROM THE BLOOD OF A MAN WHO WISHED ONLY TO SAVE ME THROUGH *WORDS*, AND WHO *SUCCEEDED* IN SAVING ME...
...THROUGH THE UNEXPECTED SACRIFICE OF *HIMSELF*.
I HAVE GONE THROUGH MUCH TROUBLE TO *COME* HERE, MY FATHER, FOR I WOULD *SPEAK* WITH YOU OF THIS DAGGER.
OF THIS *DEATH*.
OF THIS *MAN*.
I HAVE GUIDED YOU THROUGH YOUR *YOUTH*, SHANG-CHI. I HAVE *TRAINED* YOU, AND *TUTORED* YOU. IN SO *DOING*, I HAVE *SPOKEN* TO YOU AT GREAT *LENGTH*.
I HAVE BEEN REWARDED ONLY WITH *TREACHERY*.
KLAP
THE TIME FOR WORDS HAS *DIED*.
"AT MY FATHER'S *SIGNAL* THEY RISE AS *ONE*... SLOWLY... *CEREMONIOUSLY*... SHEDDING THEIR ROBES TO REVEAL THE *TRUE* NATURE OF THIS *COUNCIL OF SEVEN* -- A COUNCIL *DIFFERENT* FROM THE ONE I HAVE FACED IN THE *PAST*...*
* SEE *GIANT-SIZE M.O.K.F. #1*. --LEN
"...A *PERPETUALLY-ROTATING* COUNCIL WHOSE MEMBERS RISE AND *FALL* LIKE DEW INTO *RAIN*... BUT WHOSE *PURPOSE* NEVER APPROACHES *CHANGE*.
WE ARE *WAITING*, SHANG-CHI... TO MEET YOUR *ATTACK*...
...OR TO PURSUE YOUR *FLIGHT*.
DECIDE.
I HAVE ALREADY *MADE* MY DECISION, ASSASSINS...
THIS NIGHT I WILL *SPEAK* WITH MY *FATHER* --

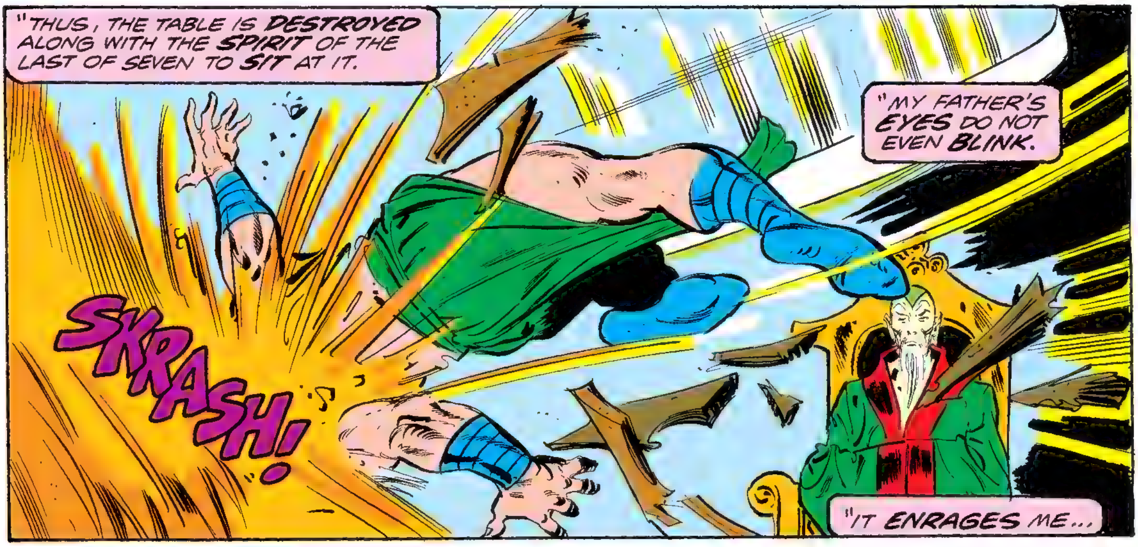

--NO MATTER WHAT FORMS OF DEATH SEEK TO SILENCE ME!!
"I MUST DIVORCE MYSELF FROM ANGER NOW...
"--FOR THE ONE WITH THE BO RUSHES SWIFTLY.
"I REACH FOR THE SLASHING BO WITH MY HANDS--
"--AND SEVER IT WITH AN UPWARD KICK.
KRATCH!
"THE MANEUVER HAS BEEN NECESSARY...
"... TO BLOCK HIS SECOND SLASH.
TWAK!
"BEHIND ME THE AIR WHINES, SLICED BY THE RAZOR SPIN OF A SHURIKEN...
"I MUST FALL INTO A CROUCH--
"--AND TRAP THE STAR IN--
FATCH
"NO--IT HAS BEEN HURLED WITH TOO MUCH FORCE, AND RENDERS THE SECTION OF BO USELESS.
"THE FIRST ONE LUNGES AGAIN, THE SPLINTERED END OF HIS BO NOW AS LETHAL AS A SPEAR...
HYAAAAHH!!
"I MAY USE HIM AS A WEAPON AGAINST THE TWO APPROACHING FROM BEHIND--
"--IF I CAN BUT LEAP ABOVE THE POINT OF THE STAFF...

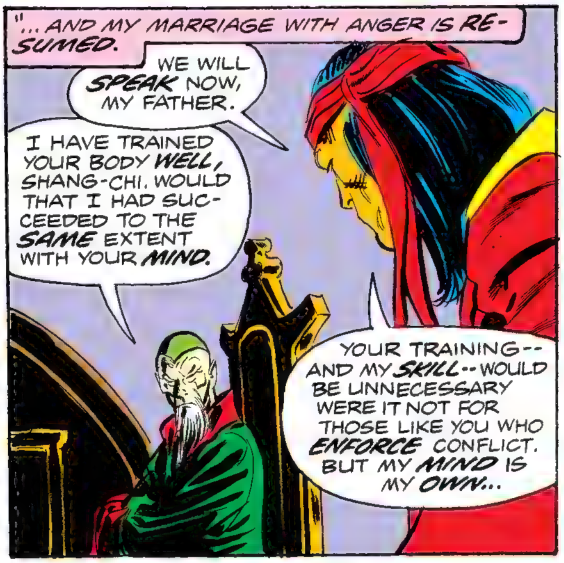

"...AND THEN DOWN UPON IT...
"...FORCING IT TO LODGE IN THE ROUGH FLOOR, AND TO DIVERT HIS MOMENTUM--
STAK!
"--UP--
"--OVER--
"--AND INTO THE TWO ASSASSINS BEHIND.
OOOOPH!
"MY FATHER REMAINS SEATED THROUGH THIS SWIRL OF VIOLENCE CREATED BY A SINGLE CLAP OF HIS HANDS...
"...AND AS HE WATCHES, NO EMOTION CROSSES HIS FACE.
"FOUR OF THE SEVEN REMAIN.
"TWO OF THOSE FOUR NOW CONVERGE ON ME.
"I LEAVE THEM...
"...TO GAIN THE WOODEN BEAM ABOVE.
YOU HAVE LEFT YOUR HONOR BEHIND YOU, SHANG-CHI--!
YOU CANNOT FIGHT US FROM THERE!
"HE IS WRONG.
HAAIII--

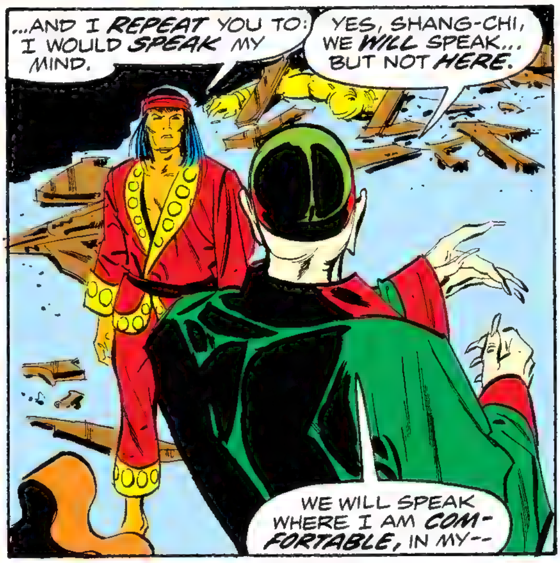

--YAAAHHH!!
BRATCH!
"THE BEAM SPLITS...
"...AND EACH OF THE HALVES FELLS ONE OF THE TWO BELOW.
"BUT EVEN AS THEY FALL, I CHANNEL THE MOMENTUM OF MY STAMP-KICK--
"--INTO A TWISTING PLUMMET--
CHWUD!
"--WHICH ENDS IN A SECOND STAMP-KICK.
"STILL MY FATHER WATCHES, AND ALTHOUGH HE IS AWARE THAT HIS COUNCIL OF SEVEN HAS BEEN REDUCED TO ONE... HE REMAINS STRIPPED OF ANY EMOTION...
"...IMMUNE EVEN TO FEAR.
"THE LAST ONE IS BIG--FAR SWIFTER THAN HIS SIZE WOULD INDICATE. BUT SINCE I HAVE MADE MYSELF AWARE OF HIS SPEED--

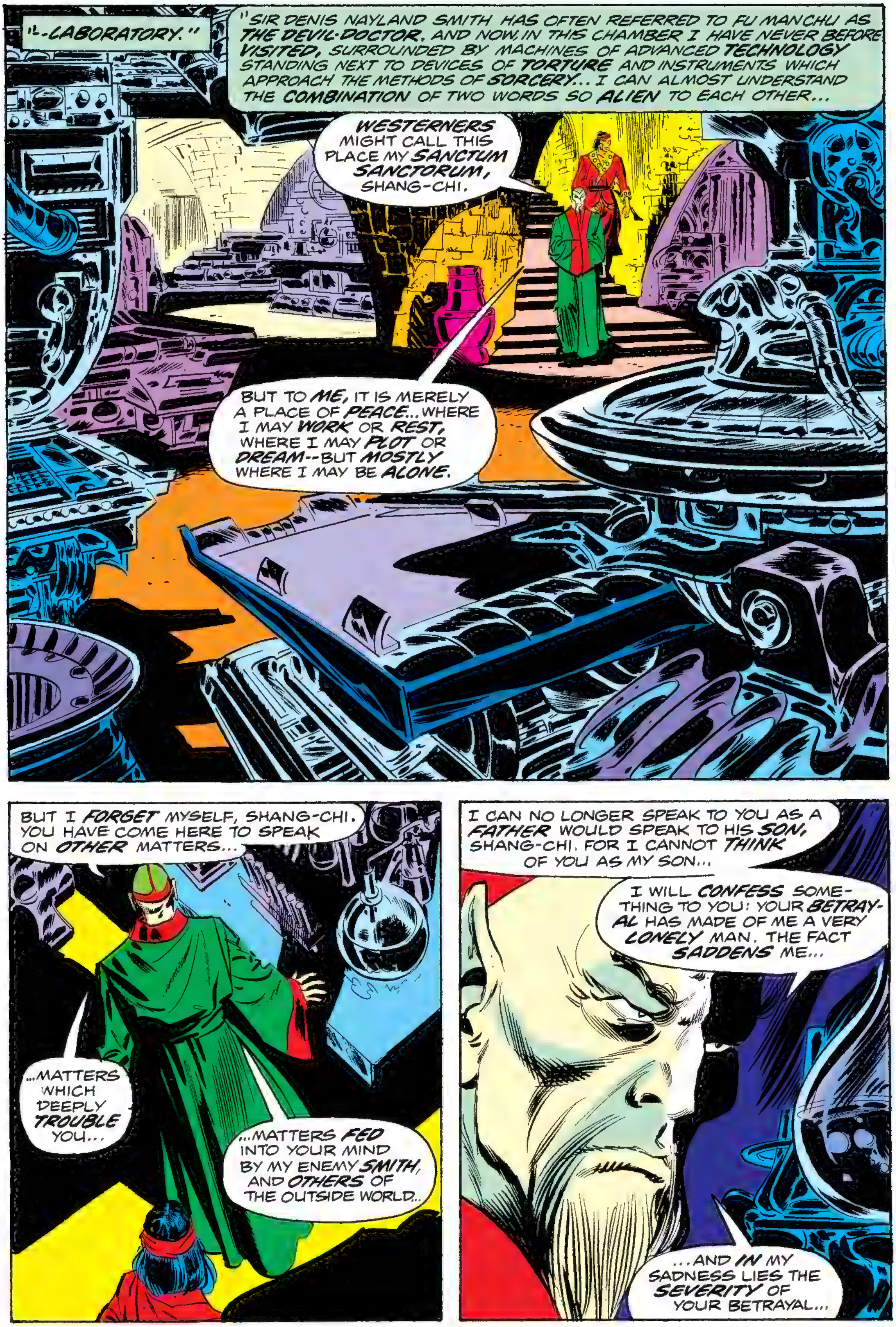

"--I HAVE ENABLED MYSELF TO MOVE UNDER IT.
HIIIIEEE!
"I WRENCH BACK ON HIS WRIST...

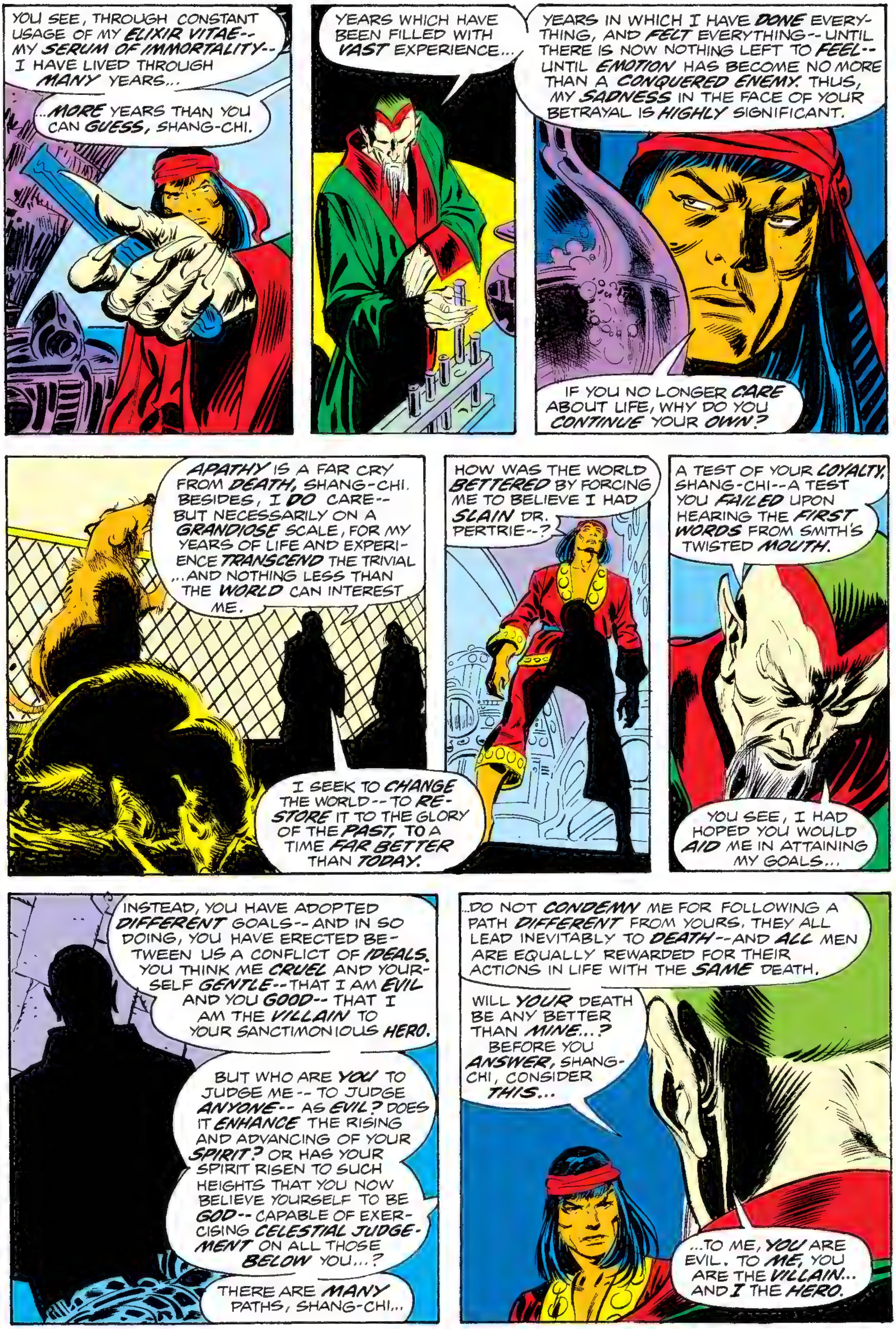

"...AND THRUST FORWARD AGAINST HIS SHOULDER.

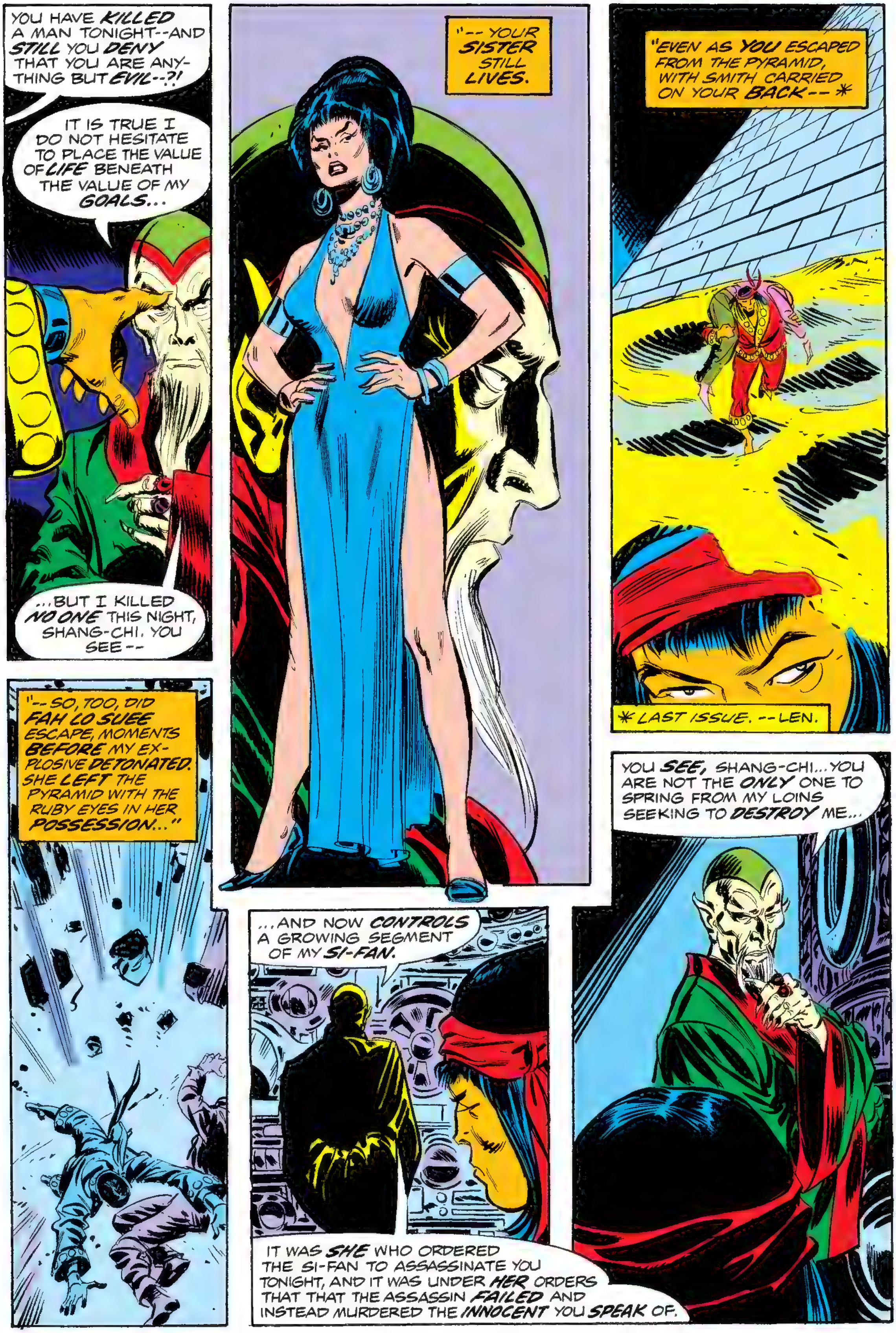

"THUS, THE TABLE IS DESTROYED ALONG WITH THE SPIRIT OF THE LAST OF SEVEN TO SIT AT IT.
"MY FATHER'S EYES DO NOT EVEN BLINK.
SKRASH!
"IT ENRAGES ME...

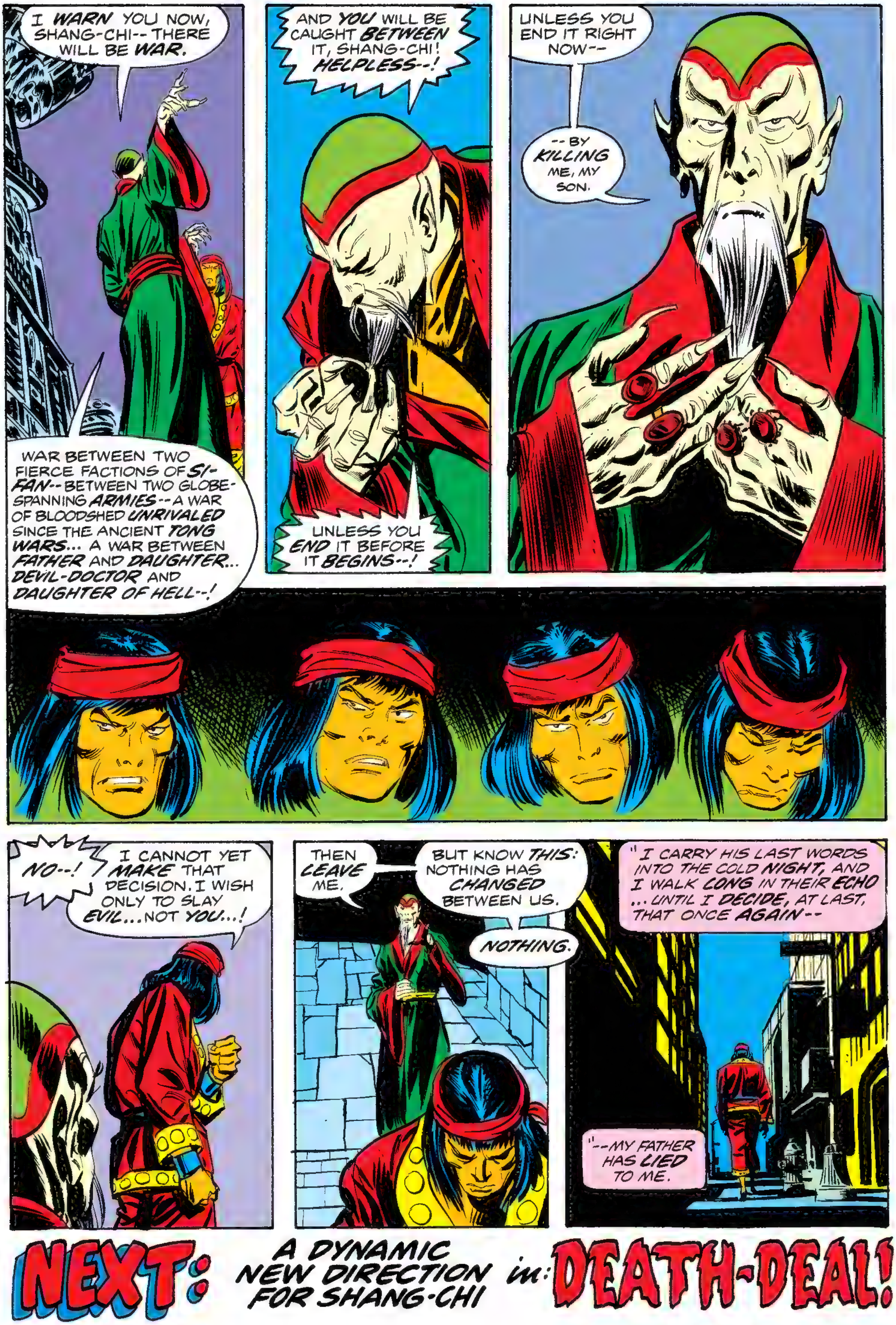

"...AND MY MARRIAGE WITH ANGER IS RESUMED.
WE WILL SPEAK NOW, MY FATHER.
I HAVE TRAINED YOUR BODY WELL, SHANG-CHI. WOULD THAT I HAD SUCCEEDED TO THE SAME EXTENT WITH YOUR MIND.
YOUR TRAINING--AND MY SKILL--WOULD BE UNNECESSARY WERE IT NOT FOR THOSE LIKE YOU WHO ENFORCE CONFLICT. BUT MY MIND IS MY OWN...

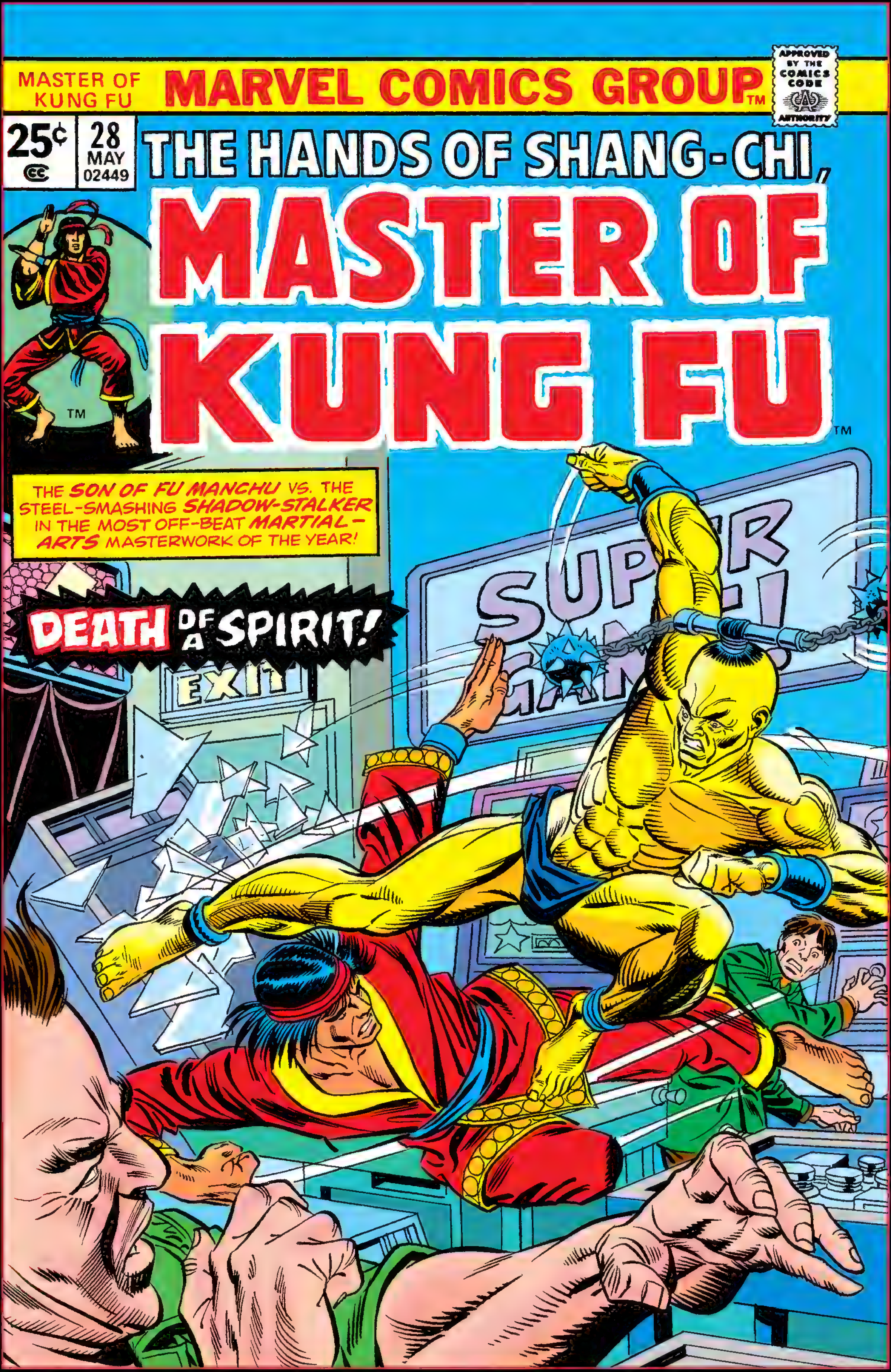

...AND I REPEAT YOU TO: I WOULD SPEAK MY MIND.
YES, SHANG-CHI, WE WILL SPEAK... BUT NOT HERE.
WE WILL SPEAK WHERE I AM COMFORTABLE, IN MY--


"L-LABORATORY."
"SIR DENIS NAYLAND SMITH HAS OFTEN REFERRED TO FU MANCHU AS THE DEVIL-DOCTOR. AND NOW, IN THIS CHAMBER I HAVE NEVER BEFORE VISITED, SURROUNDED BY MACHINES OF ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY STANDING NEXT TO DEVICES OF TORTURE AND INSTRUMENTS WHICH APPROACH THE METHODS OF SORCERY... I CAN ALMOST UNDERSTAND THE COMBINATION OF TWO WORDS SO ALIEN TO EACH OTHER...
WESTERNERS MIGHT CALL THIS PLACE MY SANCTUM SANCTORUM, SHANG-CHI.
BUT TO ME, IT IS MERELY A PLACE OF PEACE... WHERE I MAY WORK OR REST, WHERE I MAY PLOT OR DREAM--BUT MOSTLY WHERE I MAY BE ALONE.
BUT I FORGET MYSELF, SHANG-CHI. YOU HAVE COME HERE TO SPEAK ON OTHER MATTERS...
...MATTERS WHICH DEEPLY TROUBLE YOU...
...MATTERS FED INTO YOUR MIND BY MY ENEMY SMITH, AND OTHERS OF THE OUTSIDE WORLD...
I CAN NO LONGER SPEAK TO YOU AS A FATHER WOULD SPEAK TO HIS SON, SHANG-CHI. FOR I CANNOT THINK OF YOU AS MY SON...
I WILL CONFESS SOMETHING TO YOU: YOUR BETRAYAL HAS MADE OF ME A VERY LONELY MAN. THE FACT SADDENS ME...
...AND IN MY SADNESS LIES THE SEVERITY OF YOUR BETRAYAL...


YOU SEE, THROUGH CONSTANT USAGE OF MY ELIXIR VITAE-- MY SERUM OF IMMORTALITY-- I HAVE LIVED THROUGH MANY YEARS...
...MORE YEARS THAN YOU CAN GUESS, SHANG-CHI.
YEARS WHICH HAVE BEEN FILLED WITH VAST EXPERIENCE...
YEARS IN WHICH I HAVE DONE EVERYTHING, AND FELT EVERYTHING-- UNTIL THERE IS NOW NOTHING LEFT TO FEEL-- UNTIL EMOTION HAS BECOME NO MORE THAN A CONQUERED ENEMY. THUS, MY SADNESS IN THE FACE OF YOUR BETRAYAL IS HIGHLY SIGNIFICANT.
IF YOU NO LONGER CARE ABOUT LIFE, WHY DO YOU CONTINUE YOUR OWN?
APATHY IS A FAR CRY FROM DEATH, SHANG-CHI. BESIDES, I DO CARE-- BUT NECESSARILY ON A GRANDIOSE SCALE, FOR MY YEARS OF LIFE AND EXPERIENCE TRANSCEND THE TRIVIAL ...AND NOTHING LESS THAN THE WORLD CAN INTEREST ME.
I SEEK TO CHANGE THE WORLD -- TO RESTORE IT TO THE GLORY OF THE PAST, TO A TIME FAR BETTER THAN TODAY.
HOW WAS THE WORLD BETTERED BY FORCING ME TO BELIEVE I HAD SLAIN DR. PERTRIE--?
A TEST OF YOUR LOYALTY, SHANG-CHI--A TEST YOU FAILED UPON HEARING THE FIRST WORDS FROM SMITH'S TWISTED MOUTH.
YOU SEE, I HAD HOPED YOU WOULD AID ME IN ATTAINING MY GOALS...
INSTEAD, YOU HAVE ADOPTED DIFFERENT GOALS-- AND IN SO DOING, YOU HAVE ERECTED BETWEEN US A CONFLICT OF IDEALS. YOU THINK ME CRUEL AND YOURSELF GENTLE-- THAT I AM EVIL AND YOU GOOD-- THAT I AM THE VILLAIN TO YOUR SANCTIMONIOUS HERO.
BUT WHO ARE YOU TO JUDGE ME -- TO JUDGE ANYONE-- AS EVIL? DOES IT ENHANCE THE RISING AND ADVANCING OF YOUR SPIRIT? OR HAS YOUR SPIRIT RISEN TO SUCH HEIGHTS THAT YOU NOW BELIEVE YOURSELF TO BE GOD-- CAPABLE OF EXERCISING CELESTIAL JUDGEMENT ON ALL THOSE BELOW YOU...?
THERE ARE MANY PATHS, SHANG-CHI...
...DO NOT CONDEMN ME FOR FOLLOWING A PATH DIFFERENT FROM YOURS. THEY ALL LEAD INEVITABLY TO DEATH--AND ALL MEN ARE EQUALLY REWARDED FOR THEIR ACTIONS IN LIFE WITH THE SAME DEATH.
WILL YOUR DEATH BE ANY BETTER THAN MINE...? BEFORE YOU ANSWER, SHANG-CHI, CONSIDER THIS...
...TO ME, YOU ARE EVIL. TO ME, YOU ARE THE VILLAIN... AND I THE HERO.


YOU HAVE KILLED A MAN TONIGHT--AND STILL YOU DENY THAT YOU ARE ANYTHING BUT EVIL--?!
IT IS TRUE I DO NOT HESITATE TO PLACE THE VALUE OF LIFE BENEATH THE VALUE OF MY GOALS...
...BUT I KILLED NO ONE THIS NIGHT, SHANG-CHI. YOU SEE--
"--YOUR SISTER STILL LIVES.
"EVEN AS YOU ESCAPED FROM THE PYRAMID, WITH SMITH CARRIED ON YOUR BACK--*
*LAST ISSUE.--LEN.
"--SO, TOO, DID FAH LO SUEE ESCAPE, MOMENTS BEFORE MY EXPLOSIVE DETONATED. SHE LEFT THE PYRAMID WITH THE RUBY EYES IN HER POSSESSION..."
...AND NOW CONTROLS A GROWING SEGMENT OF MY SI-FAN.
IT WAS SHE WHO ORDERED THE SI-FAN TO ASSASSINATE YOU TONIGHT, AND IT WAS UNDER HER ORDERS THAT THAT THE ASSASSIN FAILED AND INSTEAD MURDERED THE INNOCENT YOU SPEAK OF.
YOU SEE, SHANG-CHI...YOU ARE NOT THE ONLY ONE TO SPRING FROM MY LOINS SEEKING TO DESTROY ME...


I WARN YOU NOW, SHANG-CHI-- THERE WILL BE WAR.
WAR BETWEEN TWO FIERCE FACTIONS OF SI-FAN-- BETWEEN TWO GLOBE-SPANNING ARMIES-- A WAR OF BLOODSHED UNRIVALED SINCE THE ANCIENT TONG WARS... A WAR BETWEEN FATHER AND DAUGHTER... DEVIL-DOCTOR AND DAUGHTER OF HELL--!
AND YOU WILL BE CAUGHT BETWEEN IT, SHANG-CHI! HELPLESS--!
UNLESS YOU END IT BEFORE IT BEGINS--!
UNLESS YOU END IT RIGHT NOW--
--BY KILLING ME, MY SON.
NO--!
I CANNOT YET MAKE THAT DECISION. I WISH ONLY TO SLAY EVIL... NOT YOU...!
THEN LEAVE ME.
BUT KNOW THIS: NOTHING HAS CHANGED BETWEEN US.
NOTHING.
"I CARRY HIS LAST WORDS INTO THE COLD NIGHT, AND I WALK LONG IN THEIR ECHO ... UNTIL I DECIDE, AT LAST, THAT ONCE AGAIN--
"--MY FATHER HAS LIED TO ME.
NEXT: A DYNAMIC NEW DIRECTION FOR SHANG-CHI in: DEATH-DEAL!


MASTER OF KUNG FU
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THE HANDS OF SHANG-CHI,
MASTER OF KUNG FU™
™
THE SON OF FU MANCHU VS. THE STEEL-SMASHING SHADOW-STALKER IN THE MOST OFF-BEAT MARTIAL-ARTS MASTERWORK OF THE YEAR!
DEATH OF A SPIRIT!
EXIT
SUPER

"Call me Shang-Chi, as my *father* did, when he raised me and molded my mind and my body in the vacuum of his Honan, China retreat. I learned many things from my father: That my name means "The Rising and Advancing of a Spirit," that my body could be forged into a living weapon through the discipline of kung fu, and that it might be used for the murder of a man called Dr. Petrie.

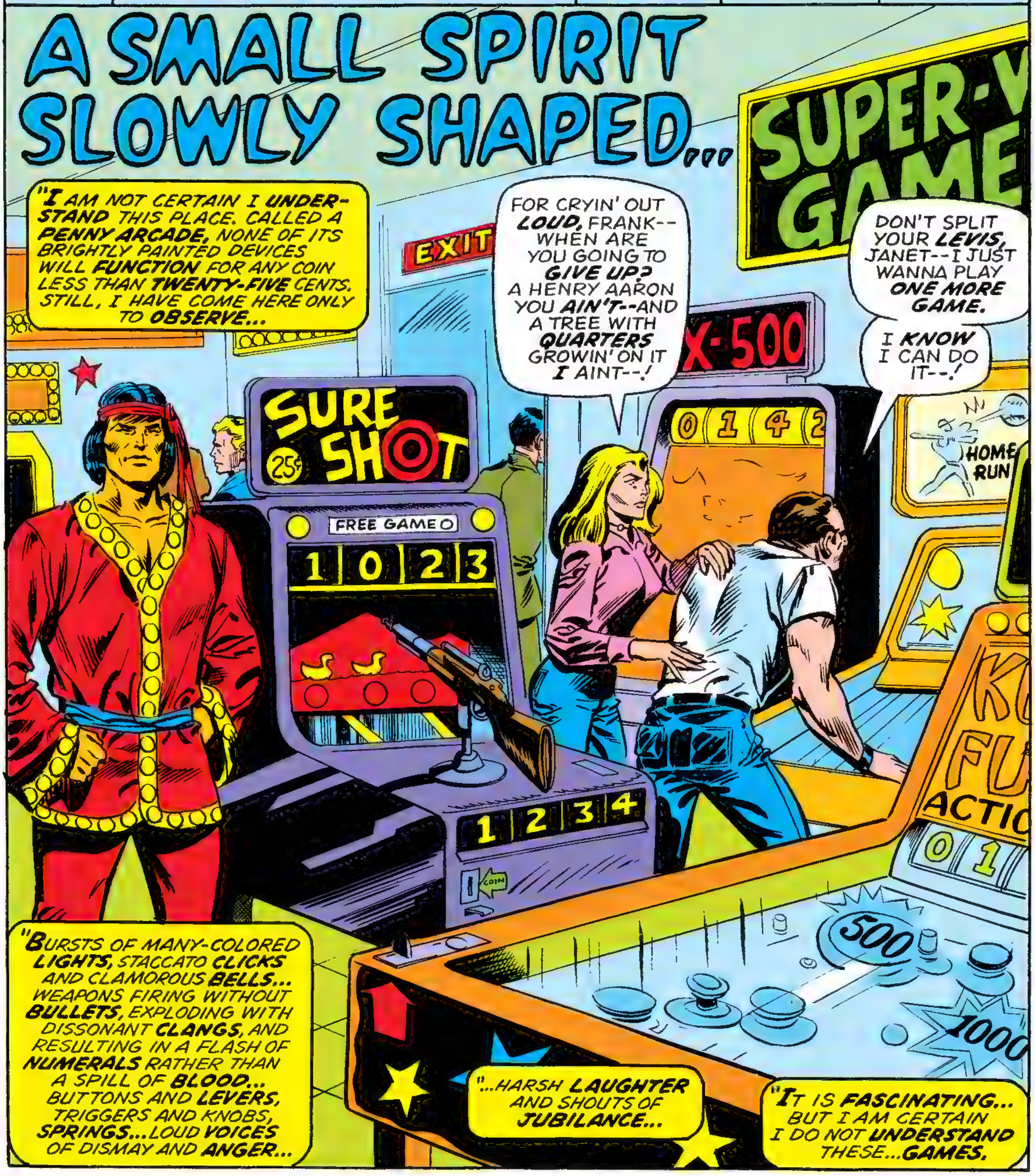
"Since then, I have learned that my father is **Dr. Fu Manchu** the most insidiously evil man on earth... and that to *honor* him would bring nothing but *dishonor* to the spirit of my *name*."

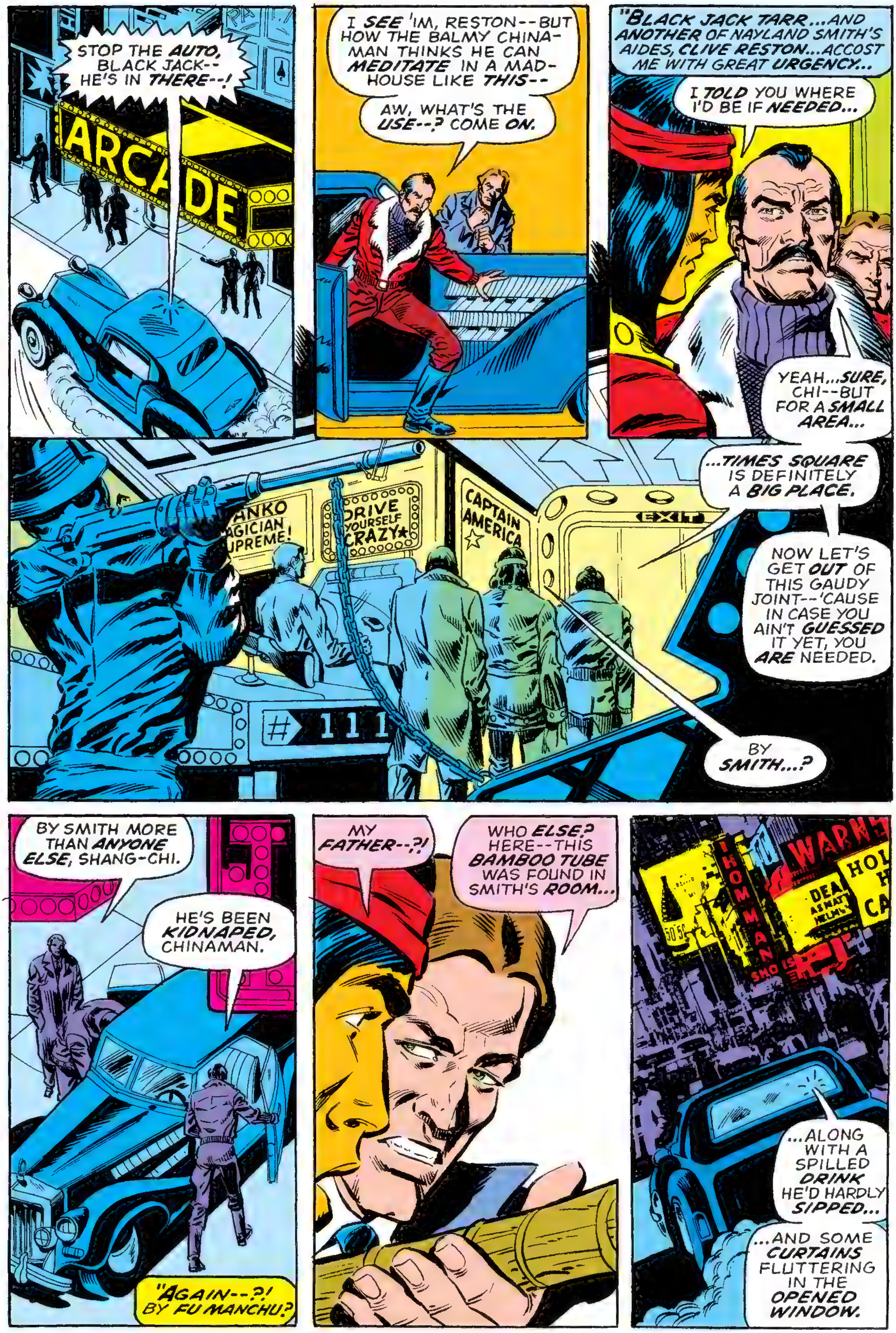
Stan Lee PRESENTS:

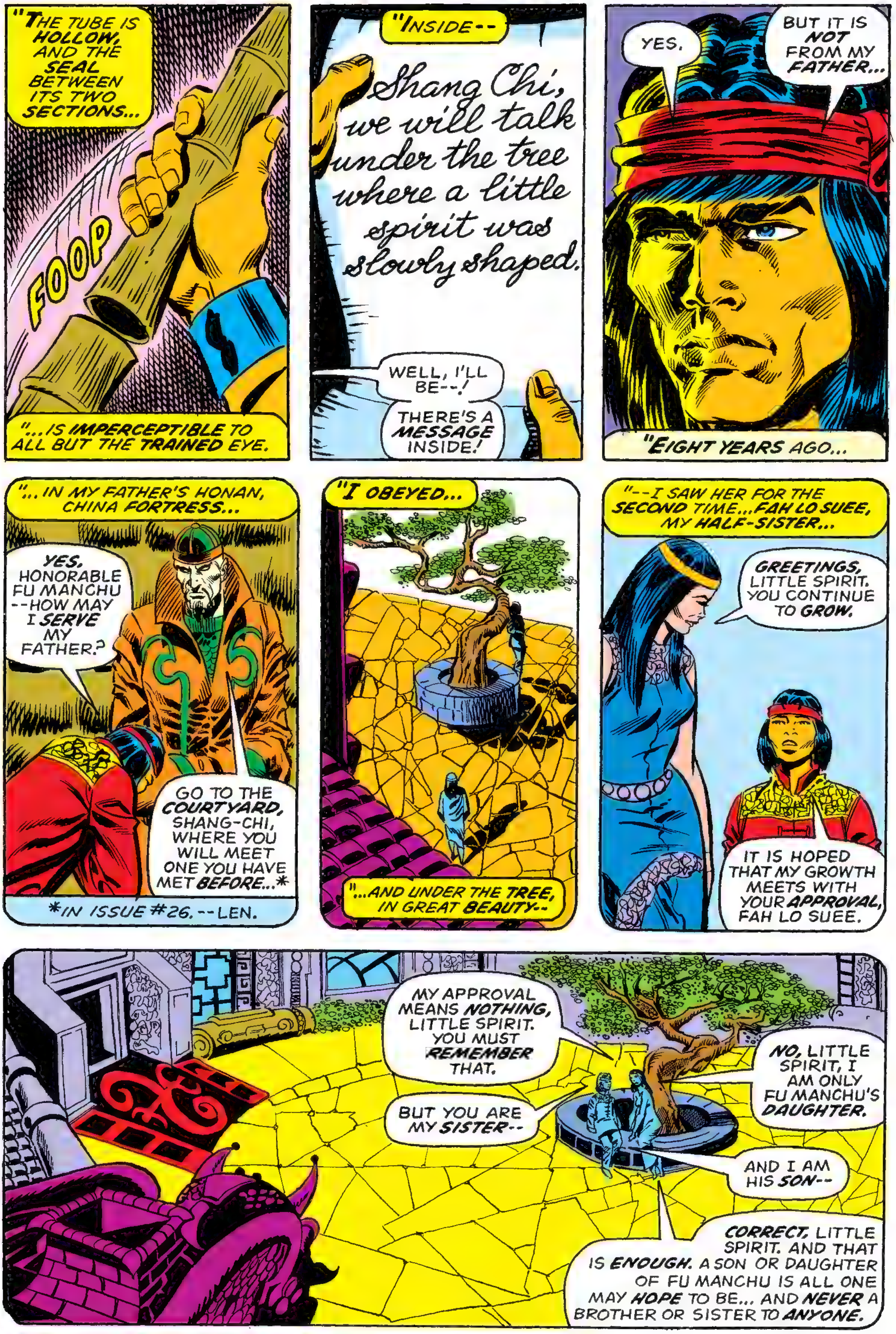
MASTER OF KUNG FU!™

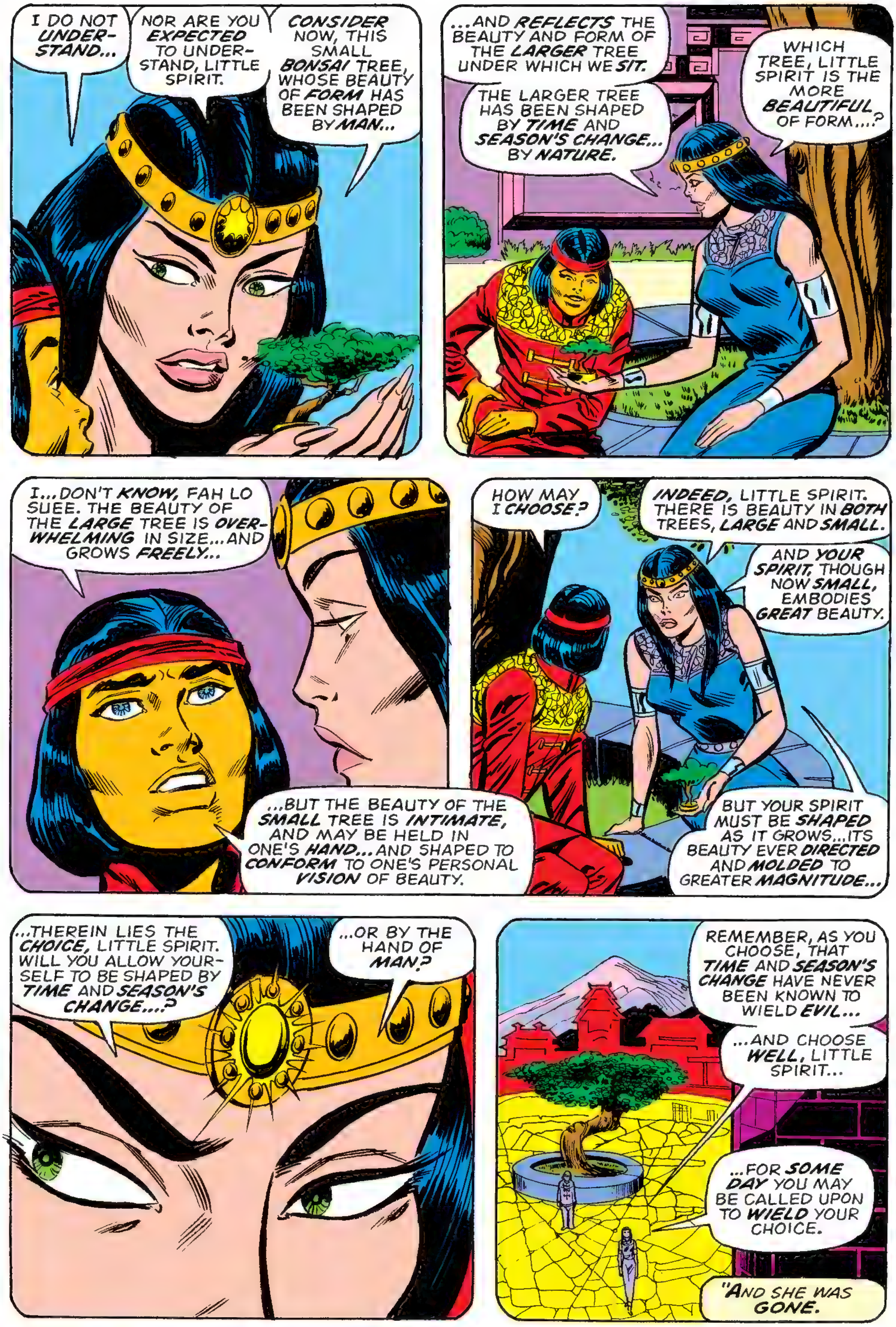
DOUG MOENCH *WRITER* | RON WILSON, ED HANNIGAN, AUBREY BRADFORD *PENCILLERS* | SAL TRAPANI *INKER* | ARTIE SIMEK *LETTERER* PHIL RACHE *COLORIST* | LEN WEIN *EDITOR*

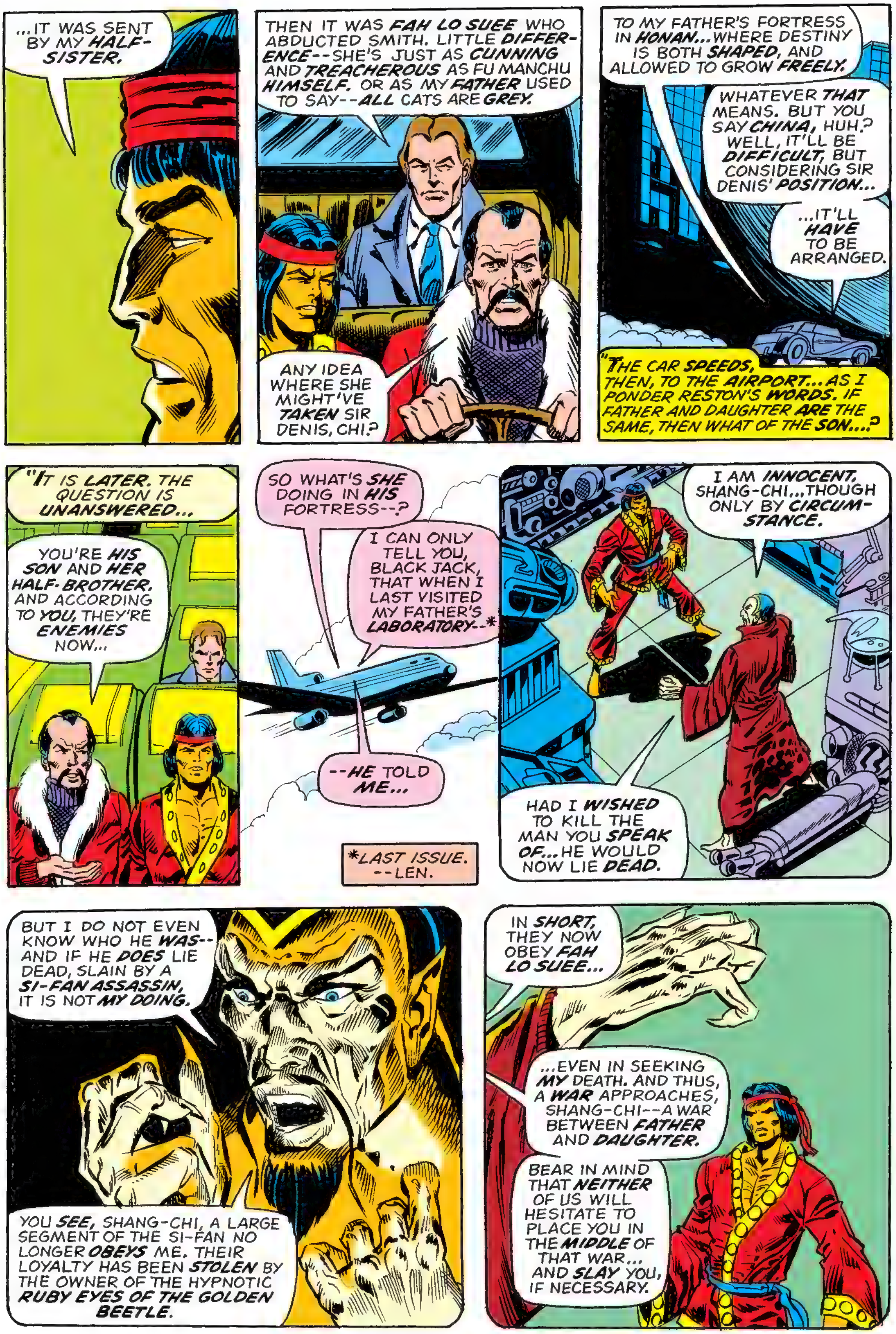
A SMALL SPIRIT SLOWLY SHAPED...

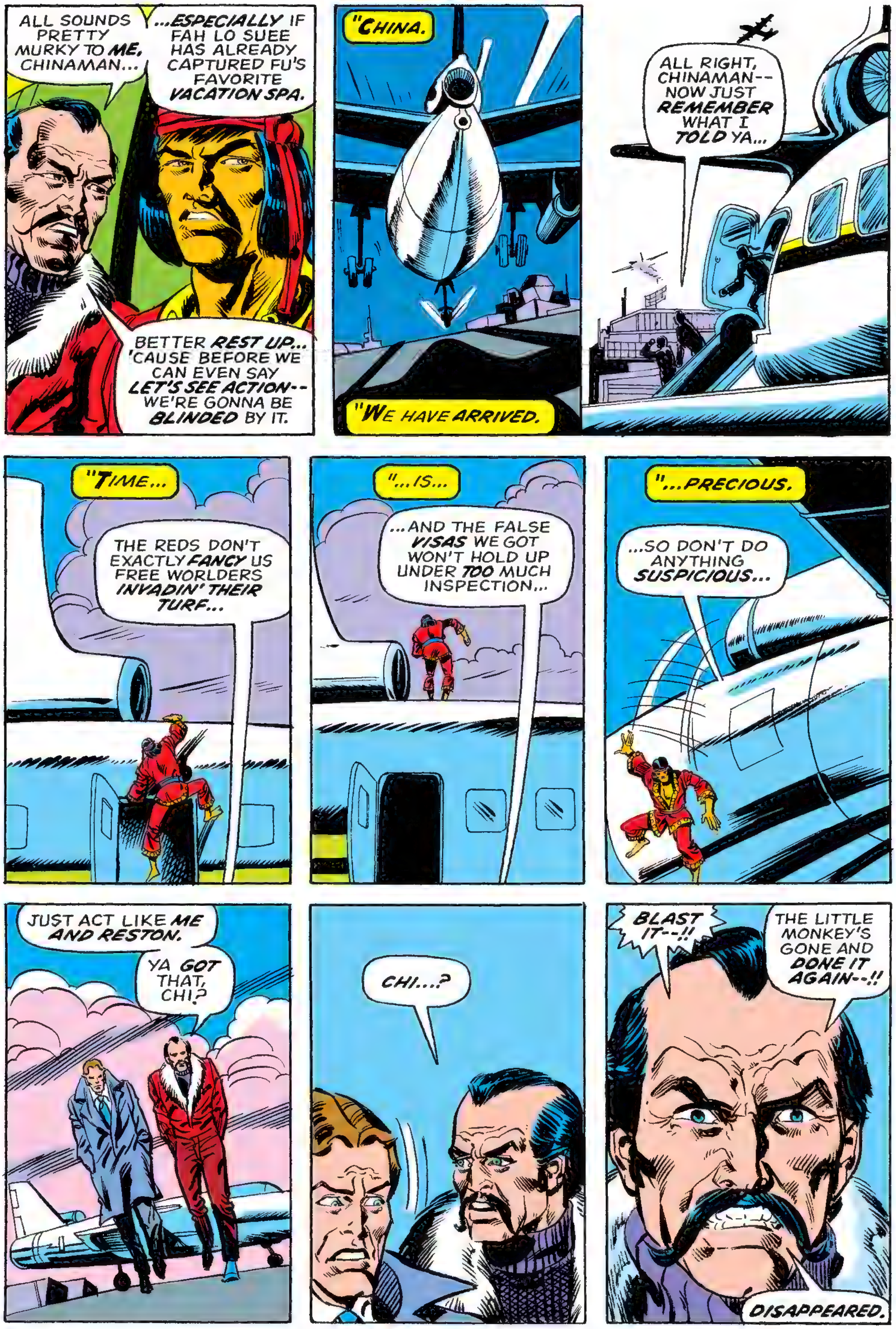

"I AM NOT CERTAIN I UNDERSTAND THIS PLACE. CALLED A PENNY ARCADE, NONE OF ITS BRIGHTLY PAINTED DEVICES WILL FUNCTION FOR ANY COIN LESS THAN TWENTY-FIVE CENTS. STILL, I HAVE COME HERE ONLY TO OBSERVE...
EXIT
SUPER-V GAME
FOR CRYIN' OUT LOUD, FRANK--WHEN ARE YOU GOING TO GIVE UP? A HENRY AARON YOU AIN'T--AND A TREE WITH QUARTERS GROWIN' ON IT I AINT--!
DON'T SPLIT YOUR LEVIS, JANET--I JUST WANNA PLAY ONE MORE GAME.
I KNOW I CAN DO IT--!
X-500
SURE SHOT 25¢
FREE GAME
1023
0142
HOME RUN
1234
COIN
KU FU ACTIO
500
1000
"BURSTS OF MANY-COLORED LIGHTS, STACCATO CLICKS AND CLAMOROUS BELLS... WEAPONS FIRING WITHOUT BULLETS, EXPLODING WITH DISSONANT CLANGS, AND RESULTING IN A FLASH OF NUMERALS RATHER THAN A SPILL OF BLOOD... BUTTONS AND LEVERS, TRIGGERS AND KNOBS, SPRINGS... LOUD VOICES OF DISMAY AND ANGER...
"...HARSH LAUGHTER AND SHOUTS OF JUBILANCE...
"IT IS FASCINATING... BUT I AM CERTAIN I DO NOT UNDERSTAND THESE... GAMES.

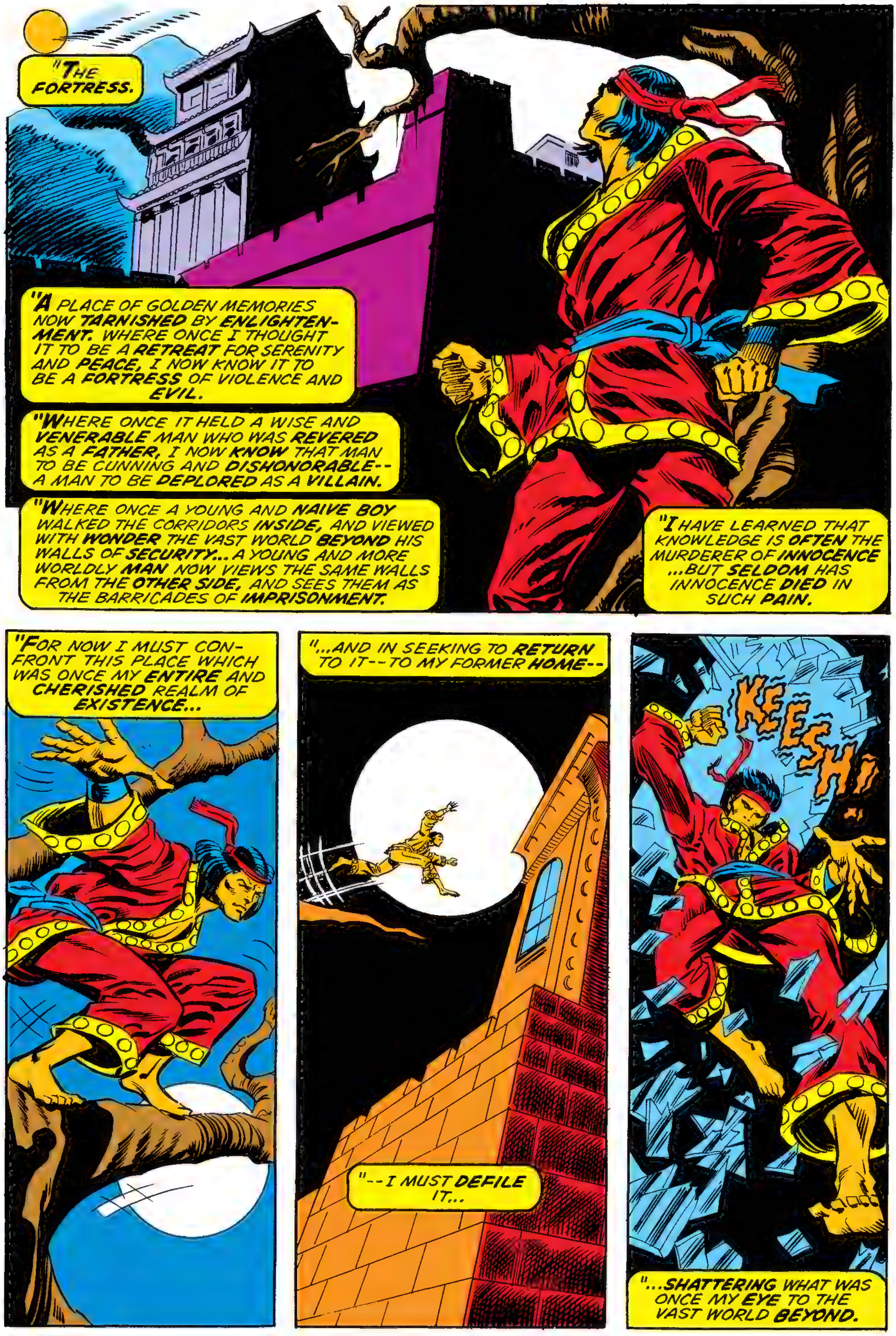

STOP THE AUTO, BLACK JACK-- HE'S IN THERE--!
ARCADE
I SEE 'IM, RESTON--BUT HOW THE BALMY CHINAMAN THINKS HE CAN MEDITATE IN A MADHOUSE LIKE THIS--
AW, WHAT'S THE USE--? COME ON.
"BLACK JACK TARR...AND ANOTHER OF NAYLAND SMITH'S AIDES, CLIVE RESTON...ACCOST ME WITH GREAT URGENCY...
I TOLD YOU WHERE I'D BE IF NEEDED...
YEAH...SURE, CHI--BUT FOR A SMALL AREA...
...TIMES SQUARE IS DEFINITELY A BIG PLACE.
NOW LET'S GET OUT OF THIS GAUDY JOINT--'CAUSE IN CASE YOU AIN'T GUESSED IT YET, YOU ARE NEEDED.
ANKO AGICIAN UPREME!
DRIVE YOURSELF CRAZY
CAPTAIN AMERICA
EXIT
#111
BY SMITH...?
BY SMITH MORE THAN ANYONE ELSE, SHANG-CHI.
HE'S BEEN KIDNAPED, CHINAMAN.
"AGAIN--?! BY FU MANCHU?
MY FATHER--?!
WHO ELSE? HERE--THIS BAMBOO TUBE WAS FOUND IN SMITH'S ROOM...
...ALONG WITH A SPILLED DRINK HE'D HARDLY SIPPED...
...AND SOME CURTAINS FLUTTERING IN THE OPENED WINDOW.

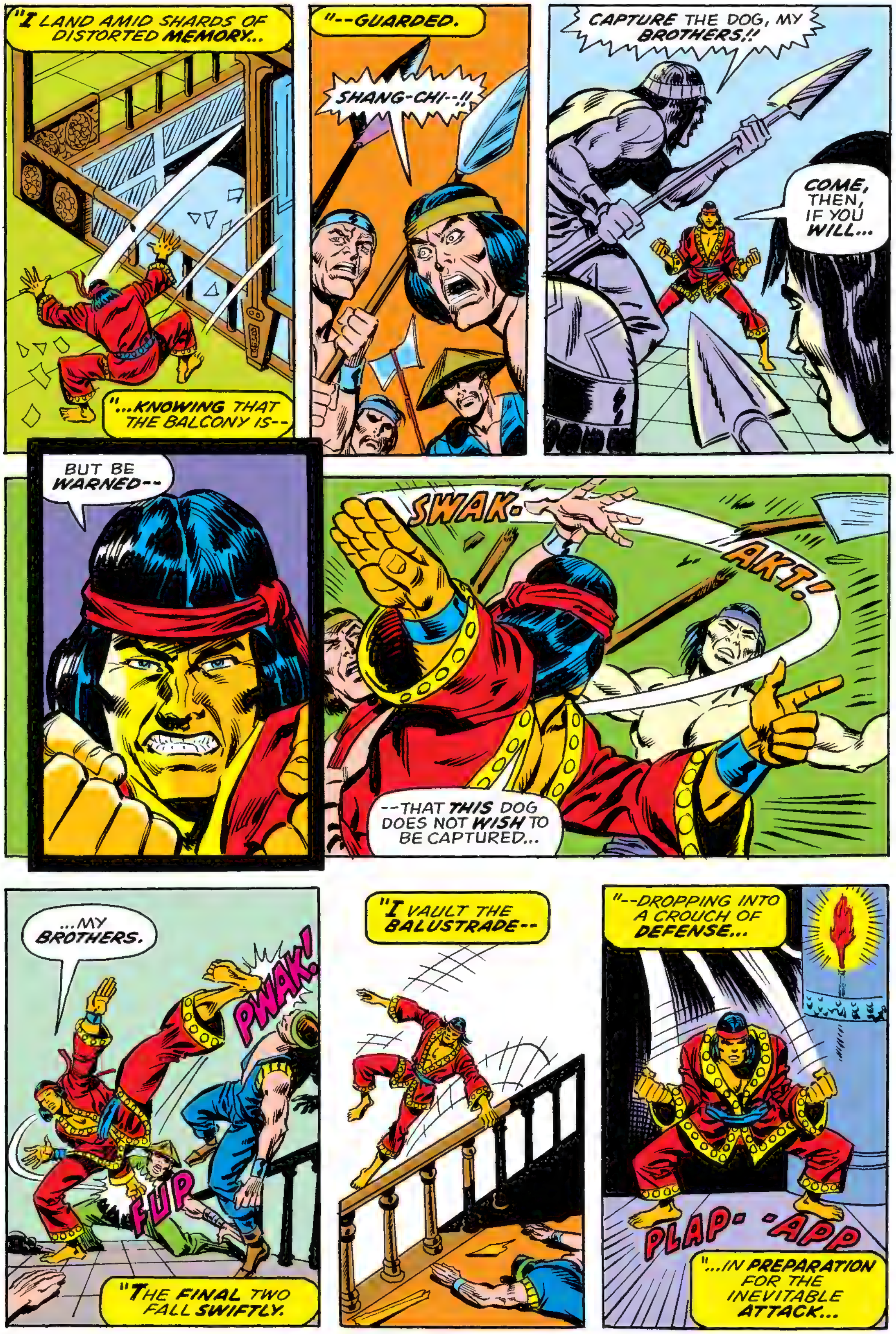

"THE TUBE IS HOLLOW, AND THE SEAL BETWEEN ITS TWO SECTIONS...
FOOP
"...IS IMPERCEPTIBLE TO ALL BUT THE TRAINED EYE.
"INSIDE--
Shang Chi, we will talk under the tree where a little spirit was slowly shaped.
WELL, I'LL BE--!
THERE'S A MESSAGE INSIDE!
YES.
BUT IT IS NOT FROM MY FATHER...
"EIGHT YEARS AGO...
"...IN MY FATHER'S HONAN, CHINA FORTRESS...
YES, HONORABLE FU MANCHU --HOW MAY I SERVE MY FATHER?
GO TO THE COURTYARD, SHANG-CHI, WHERE YOU WILL MEET ONE YOU HAVE MET BEFORE...*
*IN ISSUE #26. --LEN.
"I OBEYED...
"...AND UNDER THE TREE, IN GREAT BEAUTY--
"--I SAW HER FOR THE SECOND TIME...FAH LO SUEE, MY HALF-SISTER...
GREETINGS, LITTLE SPIRIT. YOU CONTINUE TO GROW.
IT IS HOPED THAT MY GROWTH MEETS WITH YOUR APPROVAL, FAH LO SUEE.
MY APPROVAL MEANS NOTHING, LITTLE SPIRIT. YOU MUST REMEMBER THAT.
BUT YOU ARE MY SISTER--
NO, LITTLE SPIRIT, I AM ONLY FU MANCHU'S DAUGHTER.
AND I AM HIS SON--
CORRECT, LITTLE SPIRIT. AND THAT IS ENOUGH. A SON OR DAUGHTER OF FU MANCHU IS ALL ONE MAY HOPE TO BE... AND NEVER A BROTHER OR SISTER TO ANYONE.

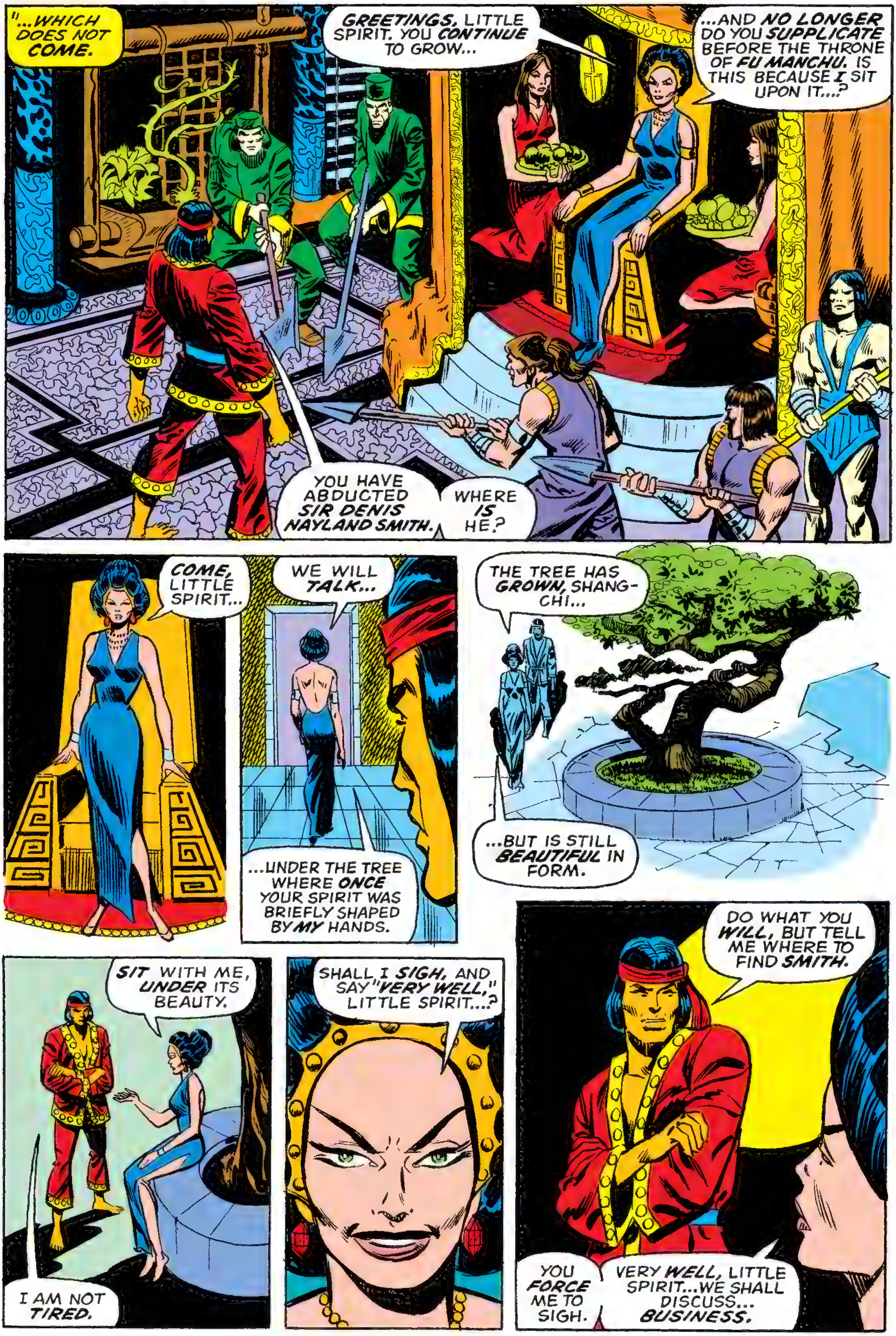

I DO NOT UNDERSTAND...
NOR ARE YOU EXPECTED TO UNDERSTAND, LITTLE SPIRIT.
CONSIDER NOW, THIS SMALL BONSAI TREE, WHOSE BEAUTY OF FORM HAS BEEN SHAPED BY MAN...
...AND REFLECTS THE BEAUTY AND FORM OF THE LARGER TREE UNDER WHICH WE SIT.
THE LARGER TREE HAS BEEN SHAPED BY TIME AND SEASON'S CHANGE... BY NATURE.
WHICH TREE, LITTLE SPIRIT IS THE MORE BEAUTIFUL OF FORM...?
I... DON'T KNOW, FAH LO SUEE. THE BEAUTY OF THE LARGE TREE IS OVERWHELMING IN SIZE... AND GROWS FREELY...
...BUT THE BEAUTY OF THE SMALL TREE IS INTIMATE, AND MAY BE HELD IN ONE'S HAND... AND SHAPED TO CONFORM TO ONE'S PERSONAL VISION OF BEAUTY.
HOW MAY I CHOOSE?
INDEED, LITTLE SPIRIT. THERE IS BEAUTY IN BOTH TREES, LARGE AND SMALL.
AND YOUR SPIRIT, THOUGH NOW SMALL, EMBODIES GREAT BEAUTY.
BUT YOUR SPIRIT MUST BE SHAPED AS IT GROWS... ITS BEAUTY EVER DIRECTED AND MOLDED TO GREATER MAGNITUDE...
...THEREIN LIES THE CHOICE, LITTLE SPIRIT. WILL YOU ALLOW YOURSELF TO BE SHAPED BY TIME AND SEASON'S CHANGE...?
...OR BY THE HAND OF MAN?
REMEMBER, AS YOU CHOOSE, THAT TIME AND SEASON'S CHANGE HAVE NEVER BEEN KNOWN TO WIELD EVIL...
...AND CHOOSE WELL, LITTLE SPIRIT...
...FOR SOME DAY YOU MAY BE CALLED UPON TO WIELD YOUR CHOICE.
"AND SHE WAS GONE.

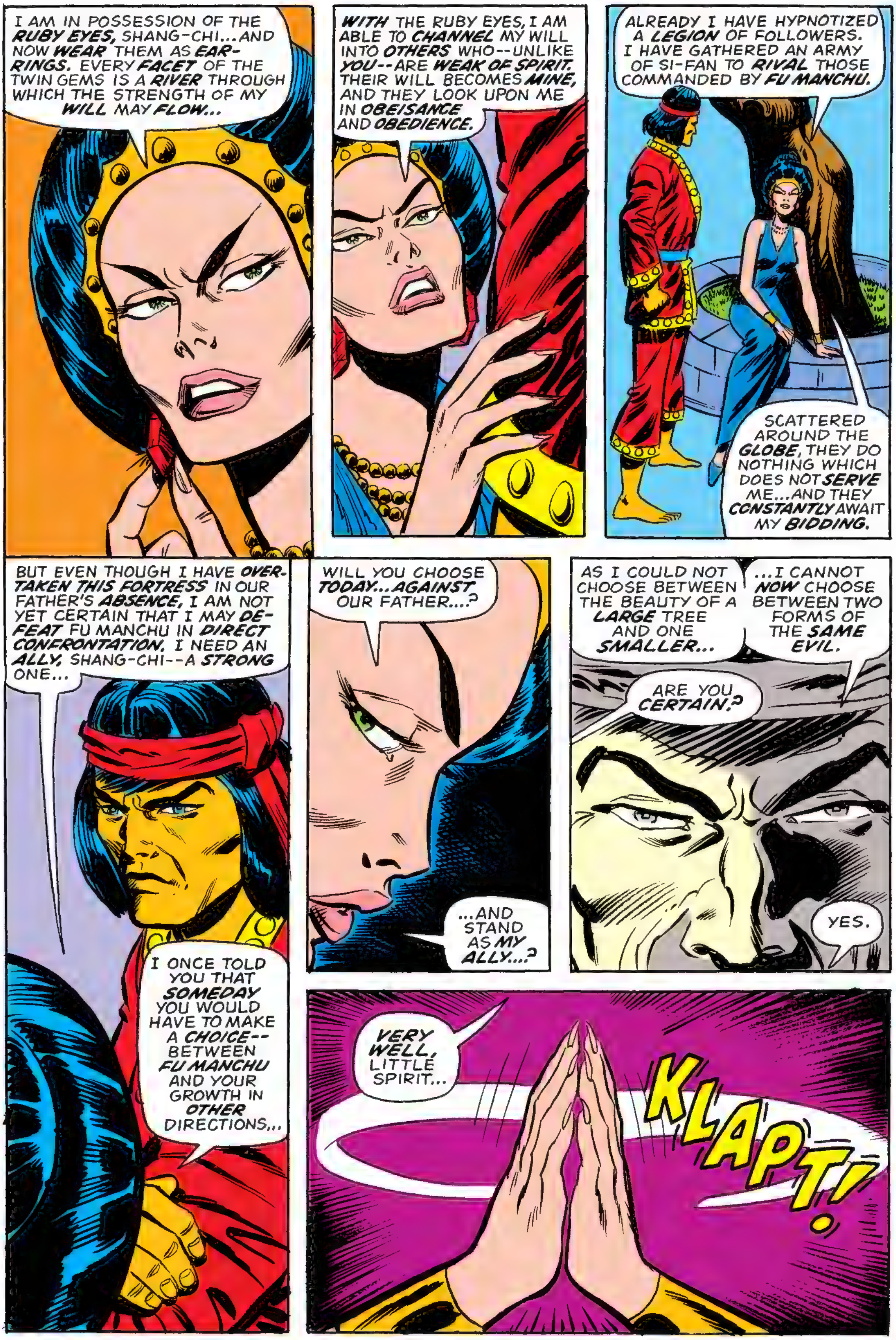

...IT WAS SENT BY MY HALF-SISTER.
THEN IT WAS FAH LO SUEE WHO ABDUCTED SMITH. LITTLE DIFFERENCE--SHE'S JUST AS CUNNING AND TREACHEROUS AS FU MANCHU HIMSELF. OR AS MY FATHER USED TO SAY--ALL CATS ARE GREY.
ANY IDEA WHERE SHE MIGHT'VE TAKEN SIR DENIS, CHI?
TO MY FATHER'S FORTRESS IN HONAN...WHERE DESTINY IS BOTH SHAPED, AND ALLOWED TO GROW FREELY.
WHATEVER THAT MEANS. BUT YOU SAY CHINA, HUH? WELL, IT'LL BE DIFFICULT, BUT CONSIDERING SIR DENIS' POSITION...
...IT'LL HAVE TO BE ARRANGED.
"THE CAR SPEEDS, THEN, TO THE AIRPORT...AS I PONDER RESTON'S WORDS. IF FATHER AND DAUGHTER ARE THE SAME, THEN WHAT OF THE SON...?
"IT IS LATER. THE QUESTION IS UNANSWERED...
YOU'RE HIS SON AND HER HALF-BROTHER. AND ACCORDING TO YOU, THEY'RE ENEMIES NOW...
SO WHAT'S SHE DOING IN HIS FORTRESS--?
I CAN ONLY TELL YOU, BLACK JACK, THAT WHEN I LAST VISITED MY FATHER'S LABORATORY--*
--HE TOLD ME...
*LAST ISSUE. --LEN.
I AM INNOCENT, SHANG-CHI...THOUGH ONLY BY CIRCUMSTANCE.
HAD I WISHED TO KILL THE MAN YOU SPEAK OF...HE WOULD NOW LIE DEAD.
BUT I DO NOT EVEN KNOW WHO HE WAS--AND IF HE DOES LIE DEAD, SLAIN BY A SI-FAN ASSASSIN, IT IS NOT MY DOING.
YOU SEE, SHANG-CHI, A LARGE SEGMENT OF THE SI-FAN NO LONGER OBEYS ME. THEIR LOYALTY HAS BEEN STOLEN BY THE OWNER OF THE HYPNOTIC RUBY EYES OF THE GOLDEN BEETLE.
IN SHORT, THEY NOW OBEY FAH LO SUEE...
...EVEN IN SEEKING MY DEATH. AND THUS, A WAR APPROACHES, SHANG-CHI--A WAR BETWEEN FATHER AND DAUGHTER.
BEAR IN MIND THAT NEITHER OF US WILL HESITATE TO PLACE YOU IN THE MIDDLE OF THAT WAR... AND SLAY YOU, IF NECESSARY.

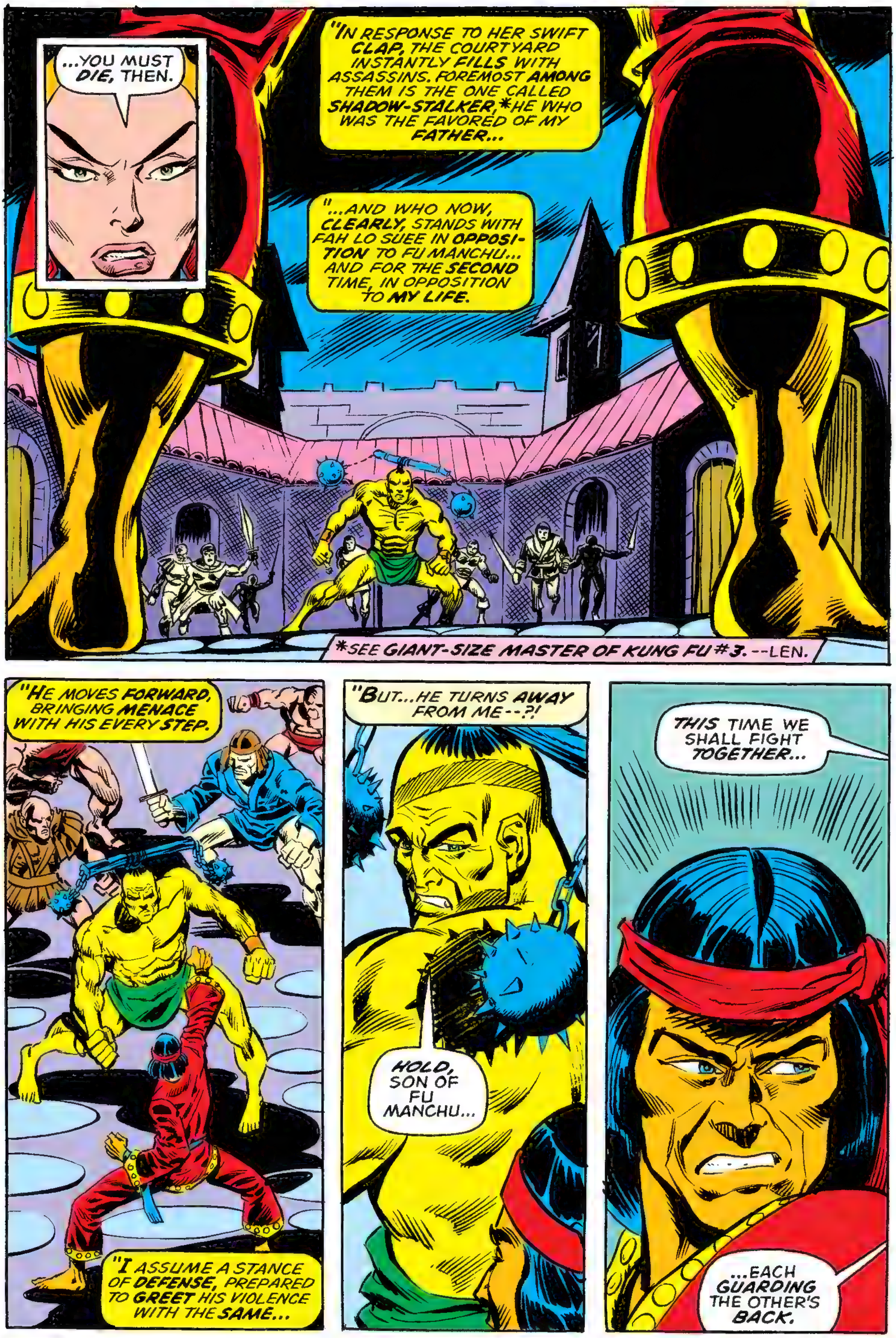

ALL SOUNDS PRETTY MURKY TO *ME*, CHINAMAN...
...*ESPECIALLY* IF FAH LO SUEE HAS ALREADY CAPTURED FU'S FAVORITE *VACATION SPA.*
BETTER *REST UP...* 'CAUSE BEFORE WE CAN EVEN SAY *LET'S SEE ACTION--* WE'RE GONNA BE *BLINDED* BY IT.
"CHINA.
"WE HAVE ARRIVED.
ALL RIGHT, CHINAMAN-- NOW JUST *REMEMBER* WHAT I *TOLD* YA...
"TIME...
THE REDS DON'T EXACTLY *FANCY* US FREE WORLDERS *INVADIN' THEIR TURF...*
"...IS...
...AND THE FALSE *VISAS* WE GOT WON'T HOLD UP UNDER *TOO* MUCH INSPECTION...
"...PRECIOUS.
...SO DON'T DO ANYTHING *SUSPICIOUS...*
JUST ACT LIKE *ME AND RESTON.*
YA *GOT* THAT, CHI?
CHI...?
BLAST IT--!!
THE LITTLE MONKEY'S GONE AND *DONE IT AGAIN--!!*
DISAPPEARED.

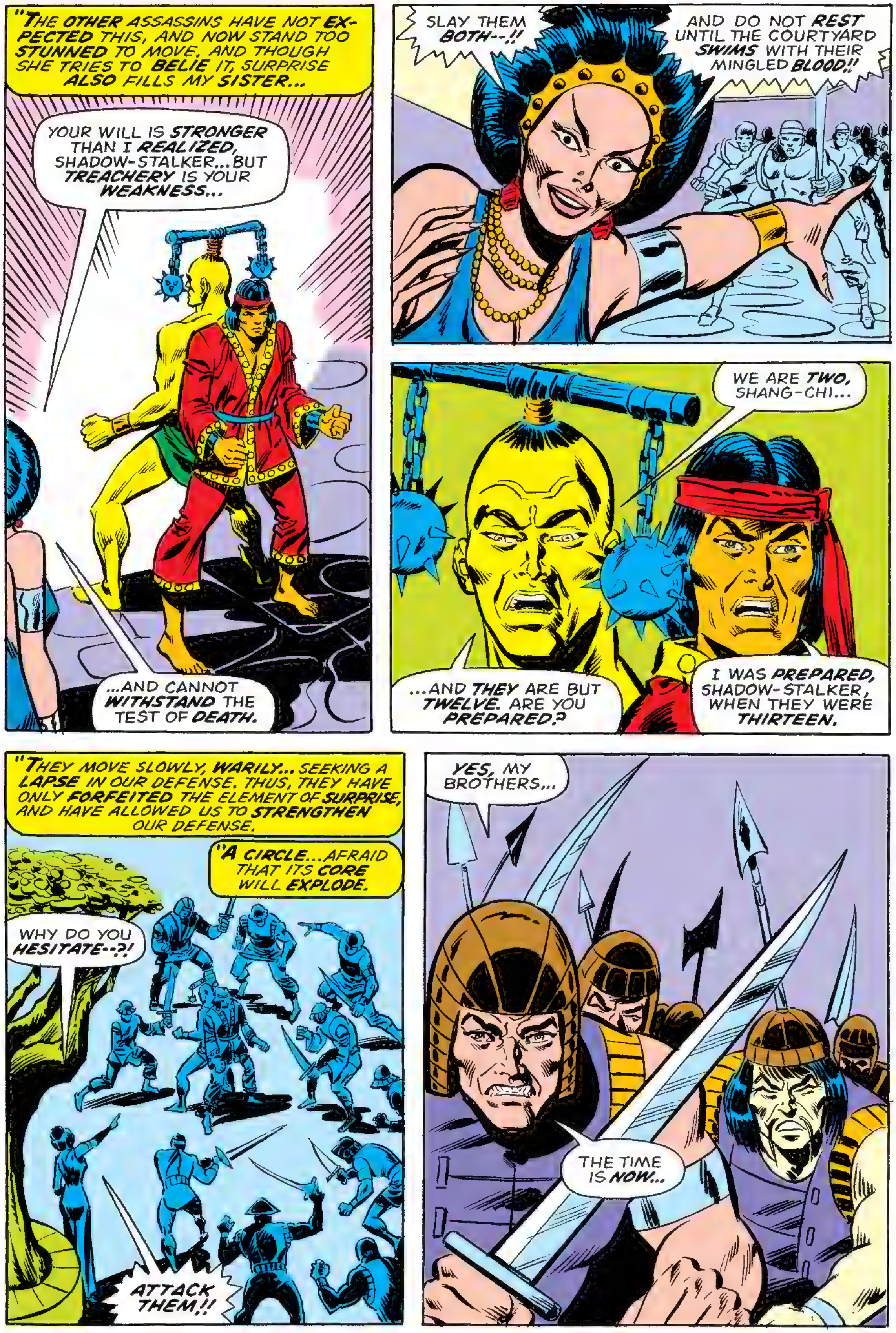

"THE FORTRESS.
"A PLACE OF GOLDEN MEMORIES NOW TARNISHED BY ENLIGHTENMENT. WHERE ONCE I THOUGHT IT TO BE A RETREAT FOR SERENITY AND PEACE, I NOW KNOW IT TO BE A FORTRESS OF VIOLENCE AND EVIL.
"WHERE ONCE IT HELD A WISE AND VENERABLE MAN WHO WAS REVERED AS A FATHER, I NOW KNOW THAT MAN TO BE CUNNING AND DISHONORABLE-- A MAN TO BE DEPLORED AS A VILLAIN.
"WHERE ONCE A YOUNG AND NAIVE BOY WALKED THE CORRIDORS INSIDE, AND VIEWED WITH WONDER THE VAST WORLD BEYOND HIS WALLS OF SECURITY... A YOUNG AND MORE WORLDLY MAN NOW VIEWS THE SAME WALLS FROM THE OTHER SIDE, AND SEES THEM AS THE BARRICADES OF IMPRISONMENT.
"I HAVE LEARNED THAT KNOWLEDGE IS OFTEN THE MURDERER OF INNOCENCE ...BUT SELDOM HAS INNOCENCE DIED IN SUCH PAIN.
"FOR NOW I MUST CONFRONT THIS PLACE WHICH WAS ONCE MY ENTIRE AND CHERISHED REALM OF EXISTENCE...
"...AND IN SEEKING TO RETURN TO IT--TO MY FORMER HOME--
"--I MUST DEFILE IT...
KEESH!!
"...SHATTERING WHAT WAS ONCE MY EYE TO THE VAST WORLD BEYOND.

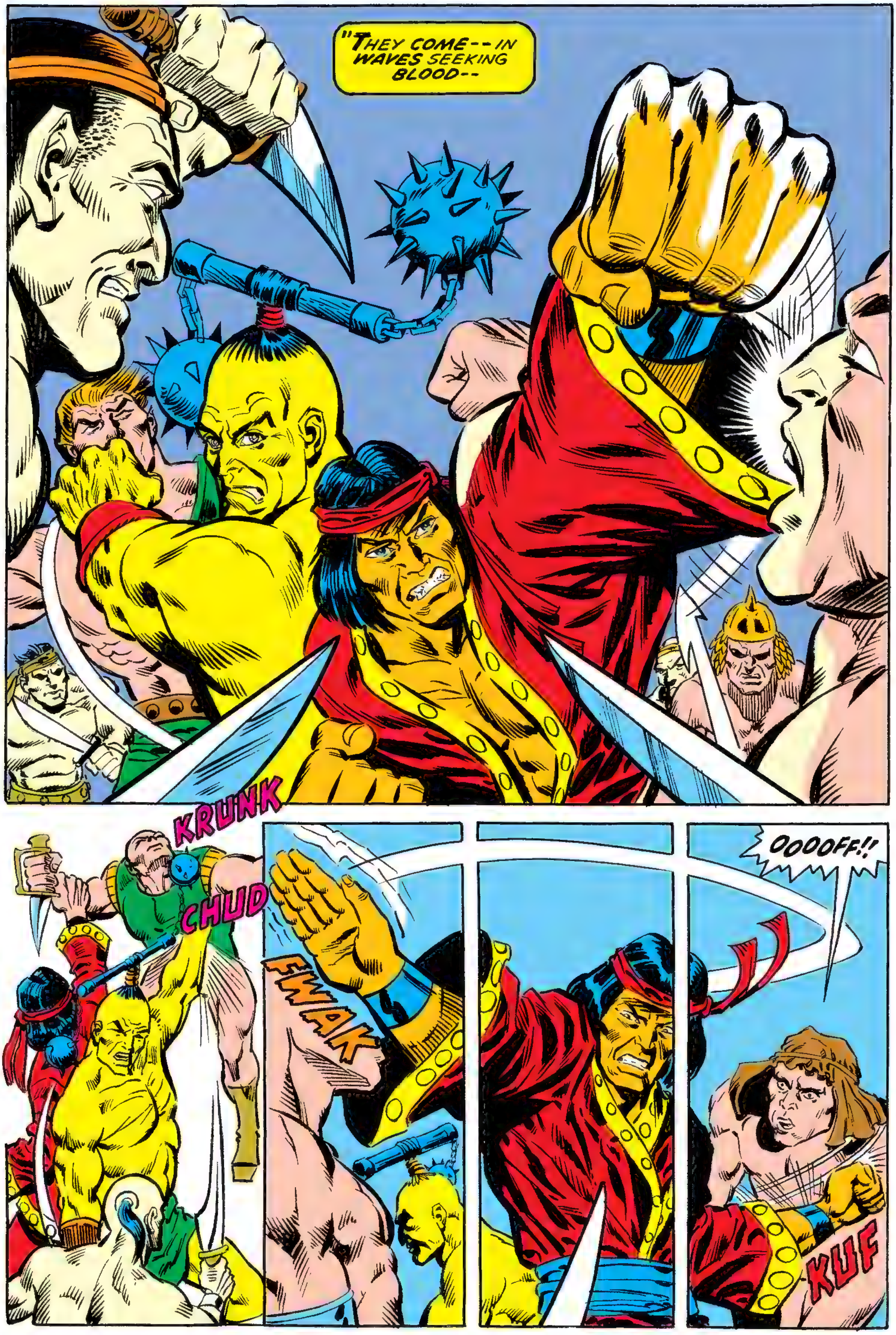

"I LAND AMID SHARDS OF DISTORTED MEMORY...
"...KNOWING THAT THE BALCONY IS--
"--GUARDED.
SHANG-CHI--!!
CAPTURE THE DOG, MY BROTHERS!!
COME, THEN, IF YOU WILL...
BUT BE WARNED--
SWAK- -AKT!
--THAT THIS DOG DOES NOT WISH TO BE CAPTURED...
...MY BROTHERS.
PWAK!
FUP
"THE FINAL TWO FALL SWIFTLY.
"I VAULT THE BALUSTRADE--
"--DROPPING INTO A CROUCH OF DEFENSE...
PLAP- -APP
"...IN PREPARATION FOR THE INEVITABLE ATTACK...

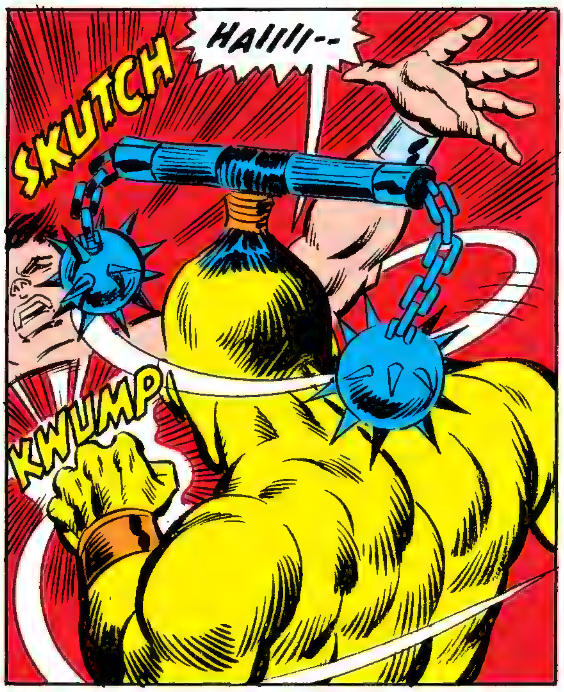

"...WHICH DOES NOT COME.
GREETINGS, LITTLE SPIRIT. YOU CONTINUE TO GROW...
...AND NO LONGER DO YOU SUPPLICATE BEFORE THE THRONE OF FU MANCHU. IS THIS BECAUSE I SIT UPON IT...?
YOU HAVE ABDUCTED SIR DENIS NAYLAND SMITH.
WHERE IS HE?
COME, LITTLE SPIRIT...
WE WILL TALK...
...UNDER THE TREE WHERE ONCE YOUR SPIRIT WAS BRIEFLY SHAPED BY MY HANDS.
THE TREE HAS GROWN, SHANG-CHI...
...BUT IS STILL BEAUTIFUL IN FORM.
SIT WITH ME, UNDER ITS BEAUTY.
I AM NOT TIRED.
SHALL I SIGH, AND SAY "VERY WELL," LITTLE SPIRIT...?
DO WHAT YOU WILL, BUT TELL ME WHERE TO FIND SMITH.
YOU FORCE ME TO SIGH.
VERY WELL, LITTLE SPIRIT...WE SHALL DISCUSS... BUSINESS.

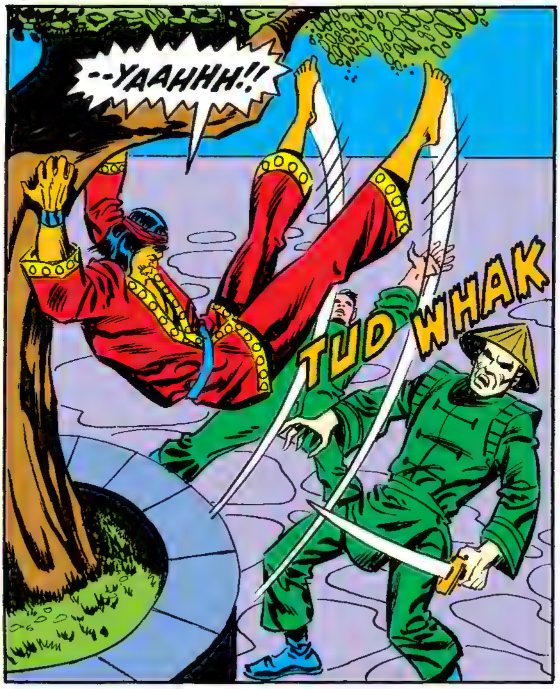

I AM IN POSSESSION OF THE RUBY EYES, SHANG-CHI...AND NOW WEAR THEM AS EAR-RINGS. EVERY FACET OF THE TWIN GEMS IS A RIVER THROUGH WHICH THE STRENGTH OF MY WILL MAY FLOW...
WITH THE RUBY EYES, I AM ABLE TO CHANNEL MY WILL INTO OTHERS WHO--UNLIKE YOU--ARE WEAK OF SPIRIT. THEIR WILL BECOMES MINE, AND THEY LOOK UPON ME IN OBEISANCE AND OBEDIENCE.
ALREADY I HAVE HYPNOTIZED A LEGION OF FOLLOWERS. I HAVE GATHERED AN ARMY OF SI-FAN TO RIVAL THOSE COMMANDED BY FU MANCHU.
SCATTERED AROUND THE GLOBE, THEY DO NOTHING WHICH DOES NOT SERVE ME...AND THEY CONSTANTLY AWAIT MY BIDDING.
BUT EVEN THOUGH I HAVE OVERTAKEN THIS FORTRESS IN OUR FATHER'S ABSENCE, I AM NOT YET CERTAIN THAT I MAY DEFEAT FU MANCHU IN DIRECT CONFRONTATION. I NEED AN ALLY, SHANG-CHI--A STRONG ONE...
I ONCE TOLD YOU THAT SOMEDAY YOU WOULD HAVE TO MAKE A CHOICE--BETWEEN FU MANCHU AND YOUR GROWTH IN OTHER DIRECTIONS...
WILL YOU CHOOSE TODAY...AGAINST OUR FATHER...?
...AND STAND AS MY ALLY...?
AS I COULD NOT CHOOSE BETWEEN THE BEAUTY OF A LARGE TREE AND ONE SMALLER...
...I CANNOT NOW CHOOSE BETWEEN TWO FORMS OF THE SAME EVIL.
ARE YOU CERTAIN?
YES.
VERY WELL, LITTLE SPIRIT...
KLAPT!

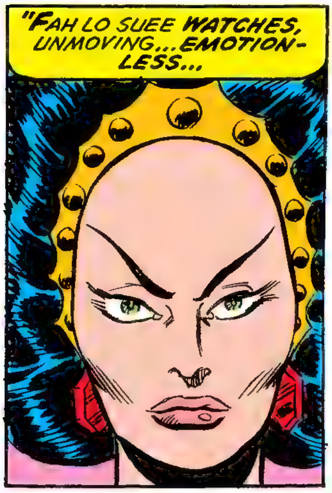

...YOU MUST DIE, THEN.
"IN RESPONSE TO HER SWIFT CLAP, THE COURTYARD INSTANTLY FILLS WITH ASSASSINS. FOREMOST AMONG THEM IS THE ONE CALLED SHADOW-STALKER,* HE WHO WAS THE FAVORED OF MY FATHER...
"...AND WHO NOW, CLEARLY, STANDS WITH FAH LO SUEE IN OPPOSITION TO FU MANCHU... AND FOR THE SECOND TIME, IN OPPOSITION TO MY LIFE.
*SEE GIANT-SIZE MASTER OF KUNG FU #3. --LEN.
"HE MOVES FORWARD, BRINGING MENACE WITH HIS EVERY STEP.
"I ASSUME A STANCE OF DEFENSE, PREPARED TO GREET HIS VIOLENCE WITH THE SAME...
"BUT...HE TURNS AWAY FROM ME--?!
HOLD, SON OF FU MANCHU...
THIS TIME WE SHALL FIGHT TOGETHER...
...EACH GUARDING THE OTHER'S BACK.

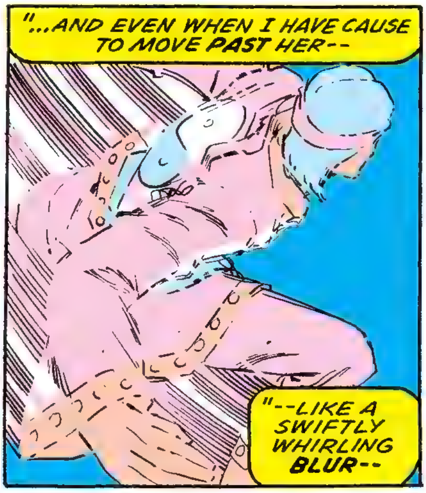

"THE OTHER ASSASSINS HAVE NOT EXPECTED THIS, AND NOW STAND TOO STUNNED TO MOVE. AND THOUGH SHE TRIES TO BELIE IT, SURPRISE ALSO FILLS MY SISTER...
YOUR WILL IS STRONGER THAN I REALIZED, SHADOW-STALKER... BUT TREACHERY IS YOUR WEAKNESS...
...AND CANNOT WITHSTAND THE TEST OF DEATH.
SLAY THEM BOTH--!!
AND DO NOT REST UNTIL THE COURTYARD SWIMS WITH THEIR MINGLED BLOOD!!
WE ARE TWO, SHANG-CHI...
...AND THEY ARE BUT TWELVE. ARE YOU PREPARED?
I WAS PREPARED, SHADOW-STALKER, WHEN THEY WERE THIRTEEN.
"THEY MOVE SLOWLY, WARILY... SEEKING A LAPSE IN OUR DEFENSE. THUS, THEY HAVE ONLY FORFEITED THE ELEMENT OF SURPRISE, AND HAVE ALLOWED US TO STRENGTHEN OUR DEFENSE.
"A CIRCLE... AFRAID THAT ITS CORE WILL EXPLODE.
WHY DO YOU HESITATE--?!
ATTACK THEM!!
YES, MY BROTHERS...
THE TIME IS NOW...

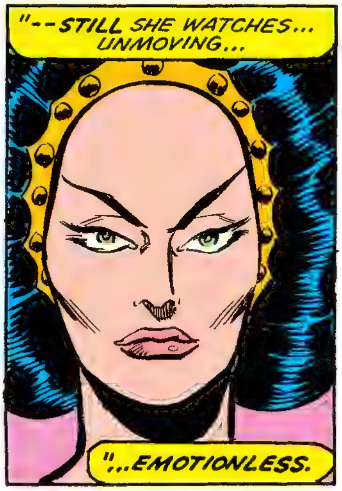

"THEY COME-- IN WAVES SEEKING BLOOD--
KRUNK
CHUD
FWAK
OOOOFF!!
KUF

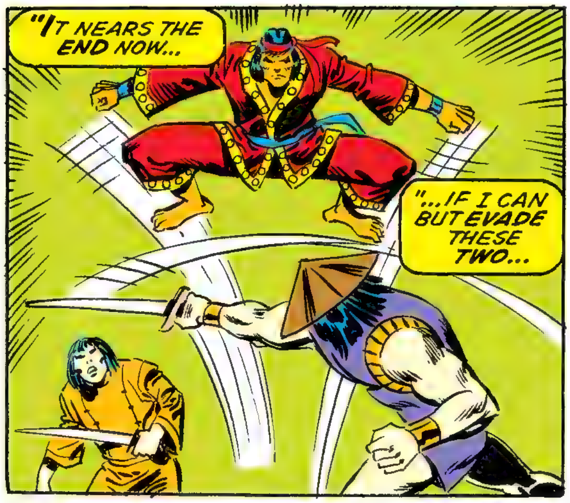

SKUTCH
HAI!!!--
KWUMP

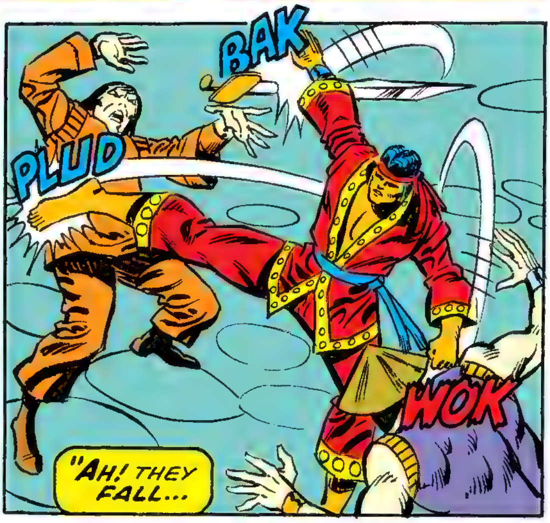

--YAAHHH!!
TUD
WHAK

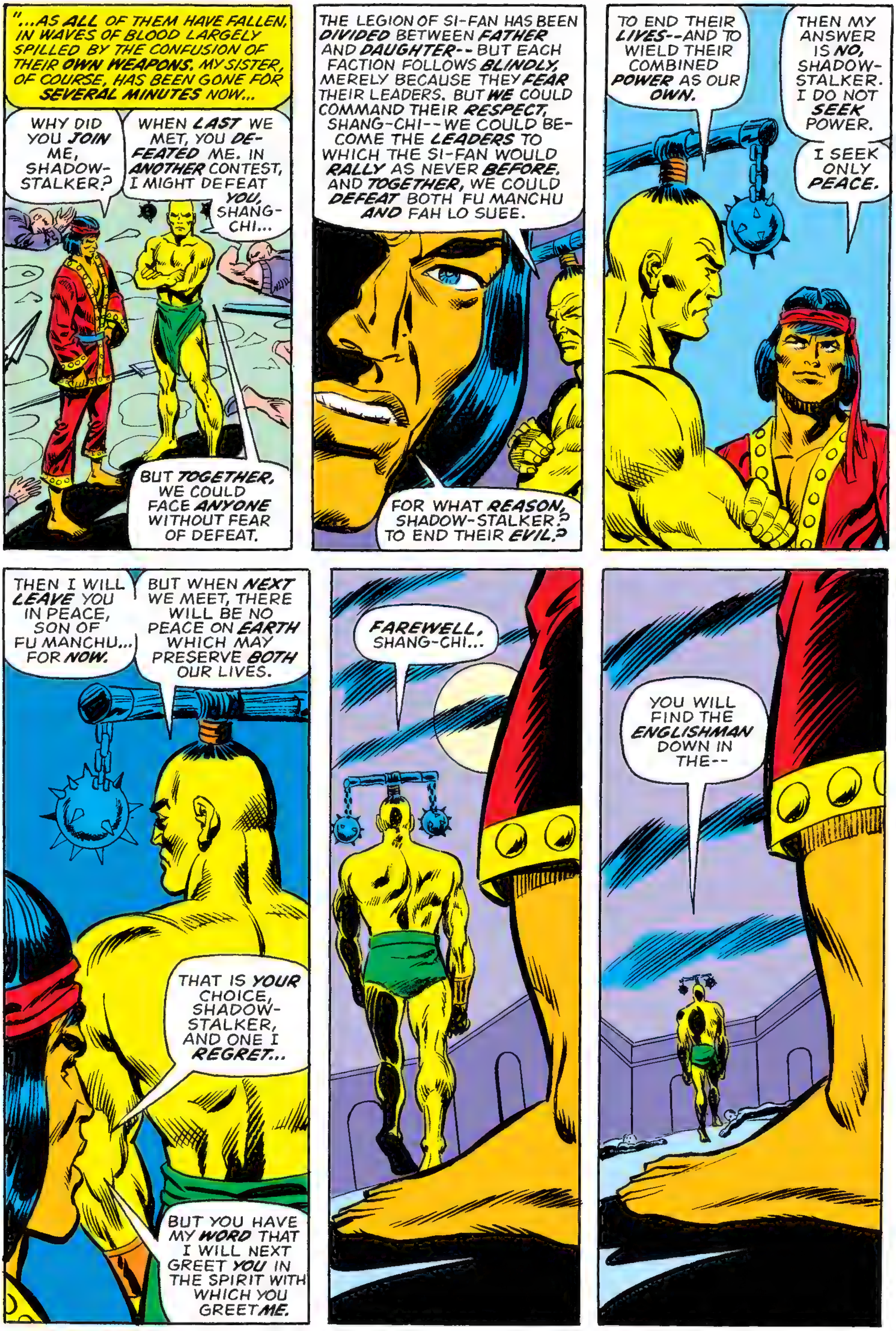

"FAH LO SUEE WATCHES, UNMOVING... EMOTIONLESS...

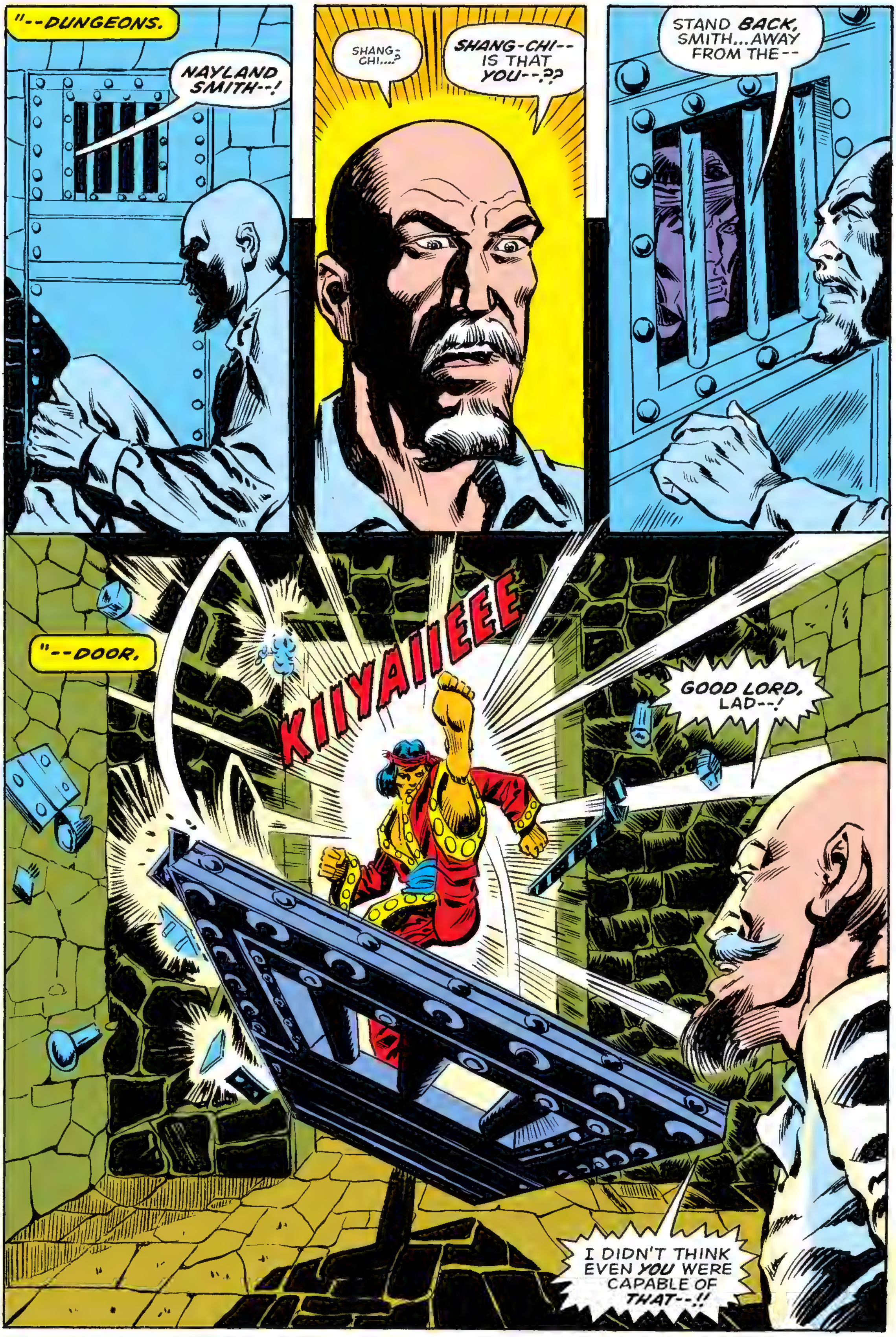

"...AND EVEN WHEN I HAVE CAUSE TO MOVE PAST HER--
"--LIKE A SWIFTLY WHIRLING BLUR--

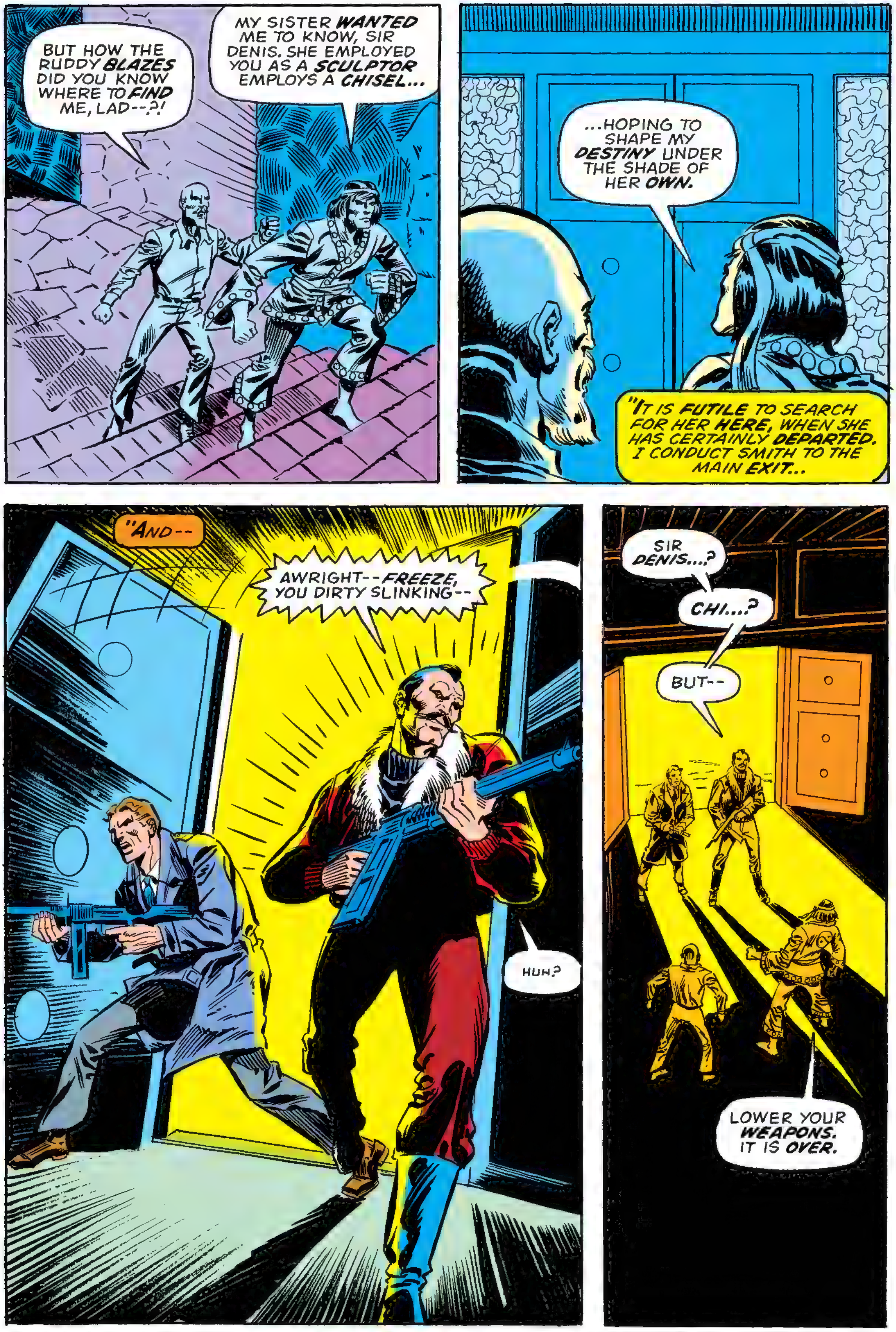

"--STILL SHE WATCHES... UNMOVING...
"...EMOTIONLESS.

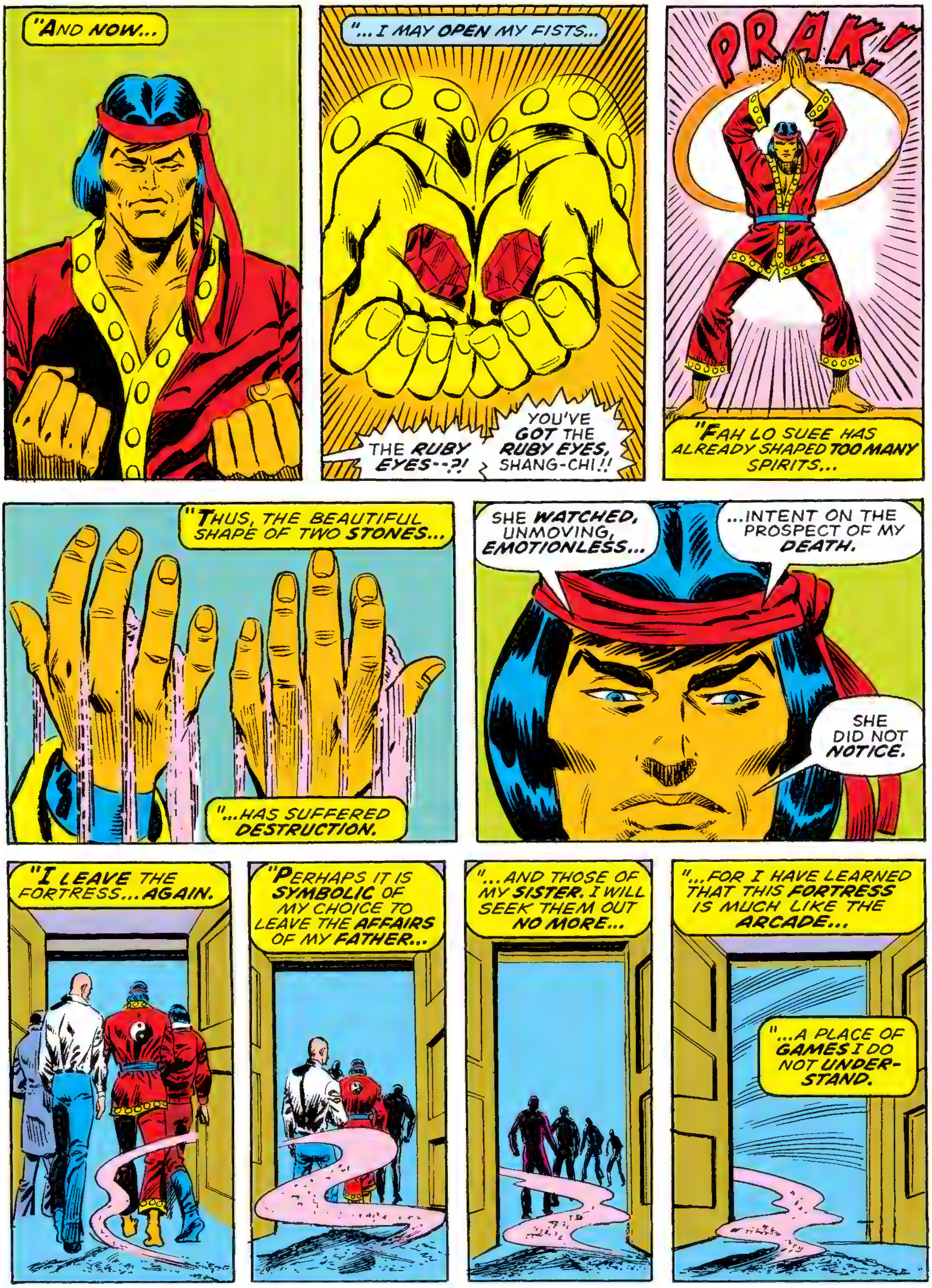

"IT NEARS THE END NOW...
"...IF I CAN BUT EVADE THESE TWO...


BAK
PLUD
WOK
"AH! THEY FALL...

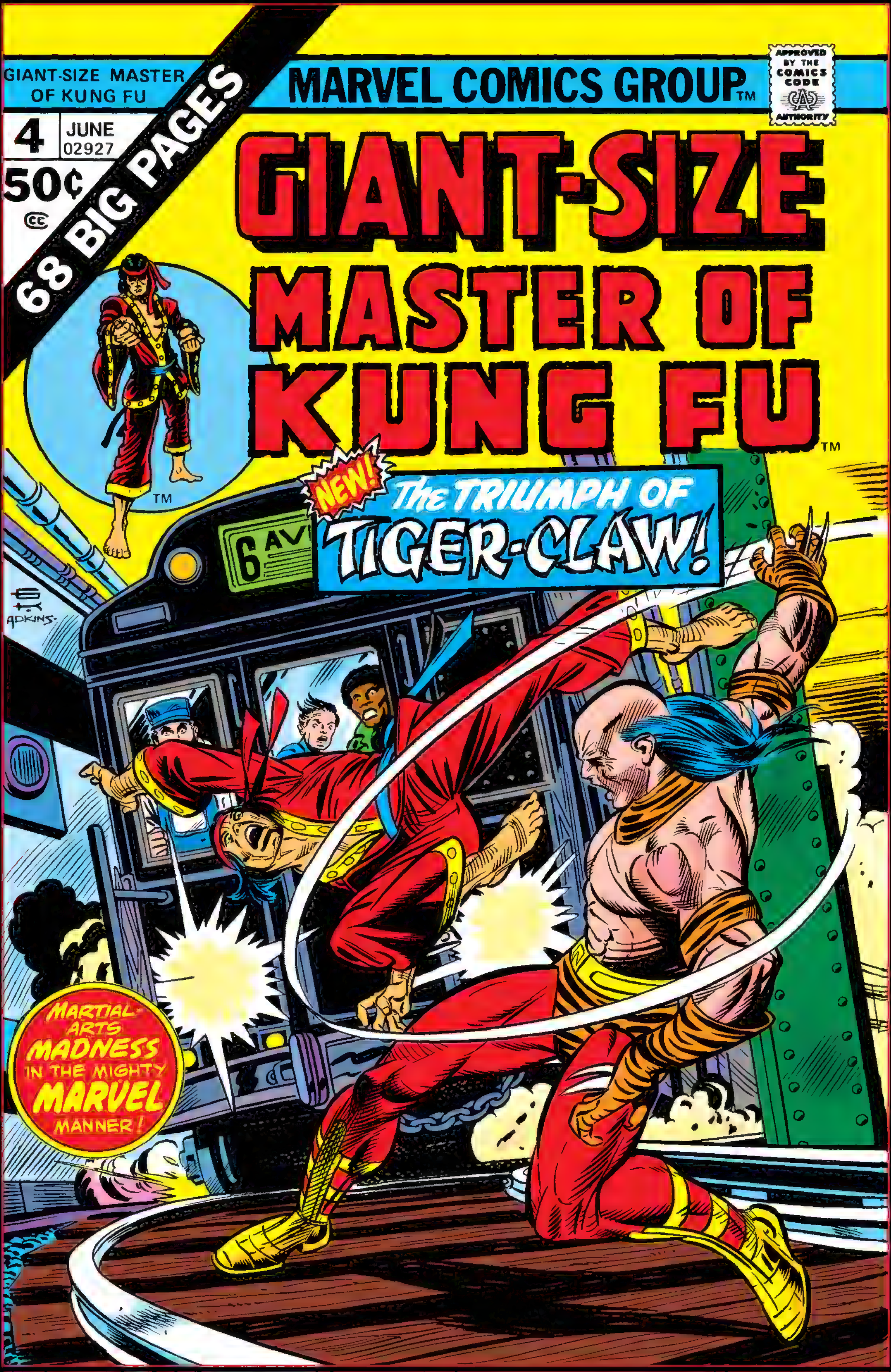

"...AS ALL OF THEM HAVE FALLEN, IN WAVES OF BLOOD LARGELY SPILLED BY THE CONFUSION OF THEIR OWN WEAPONS. MY SISTER, OF COURSE, HAS BEEN GONE FOR SEVERAL MINUTES NOW...
WHY DID YOU JOIN ME, SHADOW-STALKER?
WHEN LAST WE MET, YOU DEFEATED ME. IN ANOTHER CONTEST, I MIGHT DEFEAT YOU, SHANG-CHI...
BUT TOGETHER, WE COULD FACE ANYONE WITHOUT FEAR OF DEFEAT.
THE LEGION OF SI-FAN HAS BEEN DIVIDED BETWEEN FATHER AND DAUGHTER-- BUT EACH FACTION FOLLOWS BLINDLY, MERELY BECAUSE THEY FEAR THEIR LEADERS. BUT WE COULD COMMAND THEIR RESPECT, SHANG-CHI-- WE COULD BECOME THE LEADERS TO WHICH THE SI-FAN WOULD RALLY AS NEVER BEFORE. AND TOGETHER, WE COULD DEFEAT BOTH FU MANCHU AND FAH LO SUEE.
FOR WHAT REASON, SHADOW-STALKER? TO END THEIR EVIL?
TO END THEIR LIVES-- AND TO WIELD THEIR COMBINED POWER AS OUR OWN.
THEN MY ANSWER IS NO, SHADOW-STALKER. I DO NOT SEEK POWER.
I SEEK ONLY PEACE.
THEN I WILL LEAVE YOU IN PEACE, SON OF FU MANCHU... FOR NOW.
BUT WHEN NEXT WE MEET, THERE WILL BE NO PEACE ON EARTH WHICH MAY PRESERVE BOTH OUR LIVES.
THAT IS YOUR CHOICE, SHADOW-STALKER, AND ONE I REGRET...
BUT YOU HAVE MY WORD THAT I WILL NEXT GREET YOU IN THE SPIRIT WITH WHICH YOU GREET ME.
FAREWELL, SHANG-CHI...
YOU WILL FIND THE ENGLISHMAN DOWN IN THE--


"--DUNGEONS.
NAYLAND SMITH--!
SHANG-CHI...?
SHANG-CHI-- IS THAT YOU--??
STAND BACK, SMITH...AWAY FROM THE--
"--DOOR.
KIIYAIIEEE
GOOD LORD, LAD--!
I DIDN'T THINK EVEN YOU WERE CAPABLE OF THAT--!!


BUT HOW THE RUDDY *BLAZES* DID YOU KNOW WHERE TO *FIND* ME, LAD--?!
MY SISTER *WANTED* ME TO KNOW, SIR DENIS. SHE EMPLOYED YOU AS A *SCULPTOR* EMPLOYS A *CHISEL...*
...HOPING TO SHAPE MY *DESTINY* UNDER THE SHADE OF HER *OWN.*
"IT IS *FUTILE* TO SEARCH FOR HER *HERE*, WHEN SHE HAS CERTAINLY *DEPARTED.* I CONDUCT SMITH TO THE MAIN *EXIT...*
"AND--
AWRIGHT--*FREEZE*, YOU DIRTY SLINKING--
HUH?
SIR *DENIS...?*
CHI...?
BUT--
LOWER YOUR *WEAPONS.* IT IS *OVER.*


"AND NOW...
"...I MAY OPEN MY FISTS...
THE RUBY EYES--?!
YOU'VE GOT THE RUBY EYES, SHANG-CHI!!
PRAK!
"FAH LO SUEE HAS ALREADY SHAPED TOO MANY SPIRITS...
"THUS, THE BEAUTIFUL SHAPE OF TWO STONES...
"...HAS SUFFERED DESTRUCTION.
SHE WATCHED, UNMOVING, EMOTIONLESS...
...INTENT ON THE PROSPECT OF MY DEATH.
SHE DID NOT NOTICE.
"I LEAVE THE FORTRESS...AGAIN.
"PERHAPS IT IS SYMBOLIC OF MY CHOICE TO LEAVE THE AFFAIRS OF MY FATHER...
"...AND THOSE OF MY SISTER. I WILL SEEK THEM OUT NO MORE...
"...FOR I HAVE LEARNED THAT THIS FORTRESS IS MUCH LIKE THE ARCADE...
"...A PLACE OF GAMES I DO NOT UNDERSTAND.

NEXT ISSUE: *PAUL GULACY* REJOINS DOUG MOENCH TO LAUNCH A DYNAMIC *NEW DIRECTION* FOR SHANG-CHI, A UNIQUELY *INNOVATIVE* CYCLE OF *SLICKLY BLISTERING ACTION* AND *DAZZLINGLY GLOSSY EXCITEMENT!* IT ALL BEGINS WITH THE 3-PART *MAGNUM OPUS* RESPECTIVELY ENTITLED: 1) *THE CRYSTAL CONNECTION;* 2) *SNOWBUSTER;* AND 3) *A GULF OF LIONS!* **BE HERE!!**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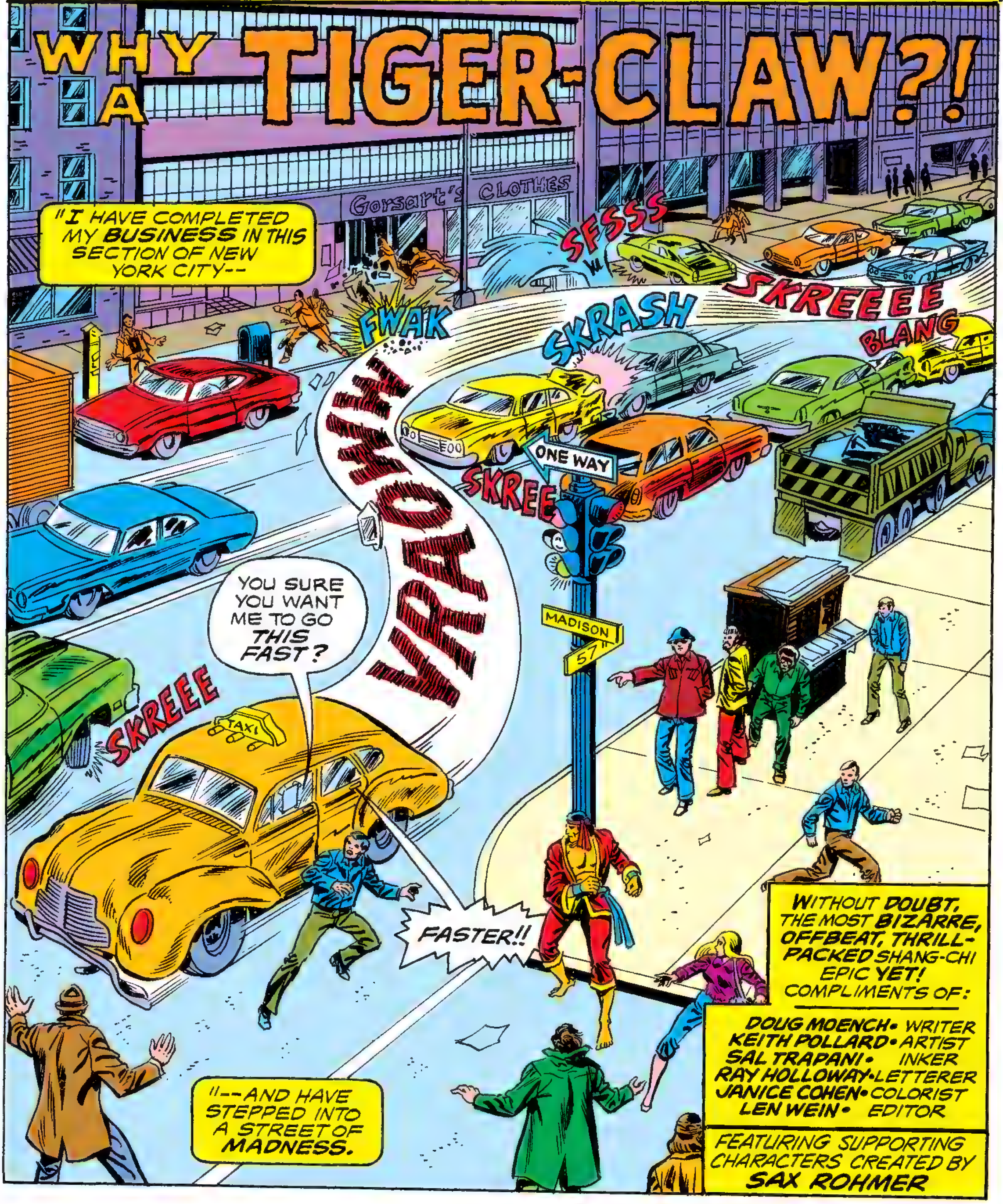
™
NEW!
The TRIUMPH OF TIGER-CLAW!
6 AV
G.K. ADKINS
MARTIAL-ARTS MADNESS IN THE MIGHTY MARVEL MANNER!

"Call me Shang-Chi, as my *father* did, when he raised me and molded my mind and my body in the vacuum of his Honan, China retreat. I learned many things from my father: That my name means "The Rising and Advancing of a Spirit," that my body could be forged into a living weapon through the discipline of kung fu, and that it might be used for the murder of a man called Dr. Petrie.

"Since then, I have learned that my father is **Dr. Fu Manchu** the most insidiously evil man on earth... and that to *honor* him would bring nothing but *dishonor* to the spirit of my *name*."

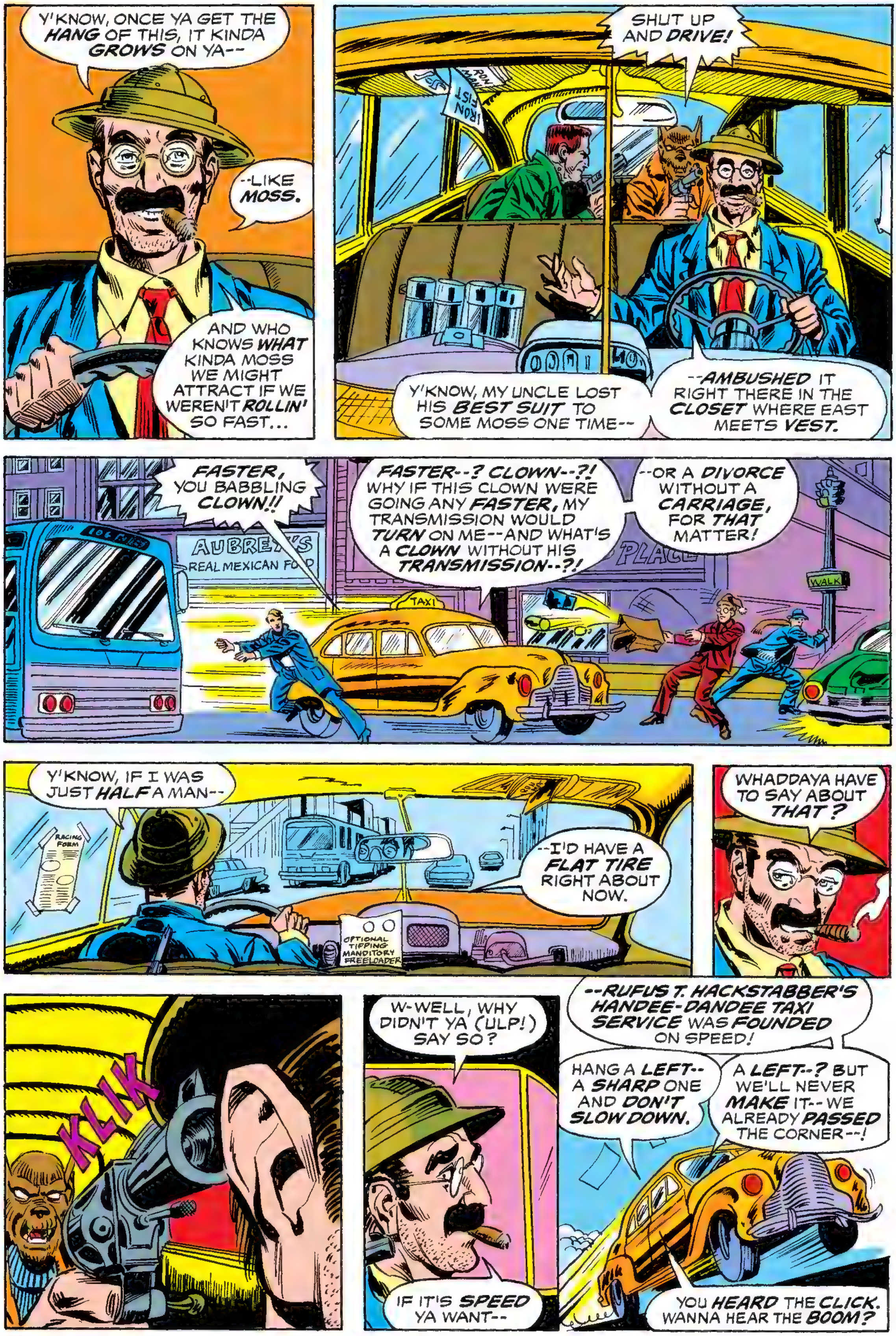
Stan Lee PRESENTS: MASTER OF KUNG FU!™

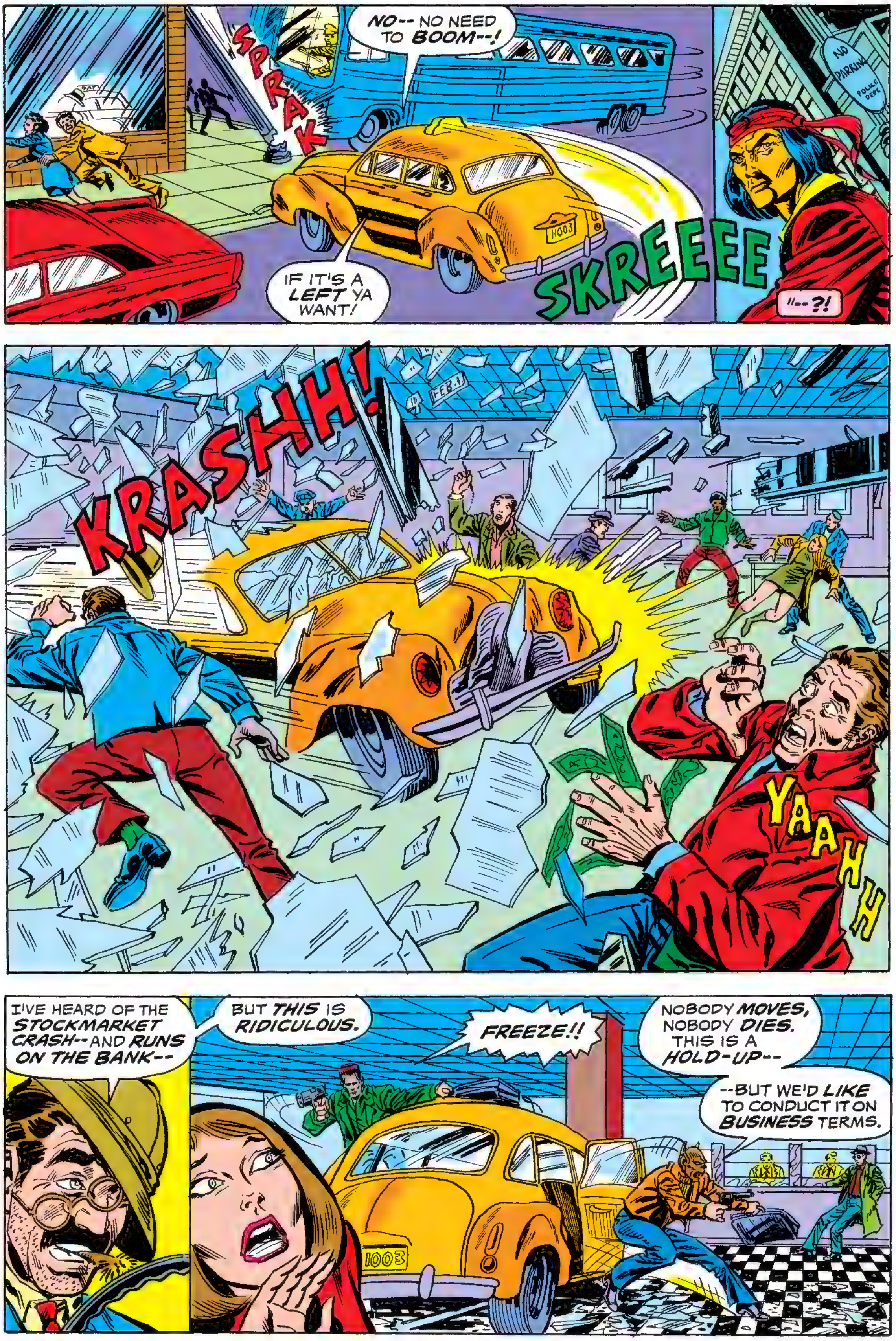

WHY A TIGER-CLAW?!
"I HAVE COMPLETED MY BUSINESS IN THIS SECTION OF NEW YORK CITY--
Gorsart's CLOTHES
SFSSS
SKREEEE
FWAK
SKRASH
BLANG
VRAOWM
ONE WAY
SKREE
MADISON
57
YOU SURE YOU WANT ME TO GO THIS FAST?
SKREEE
TAXI
FASTER!!
"--AND HAVE STEPPED INTO A STREET OF MADNESS.

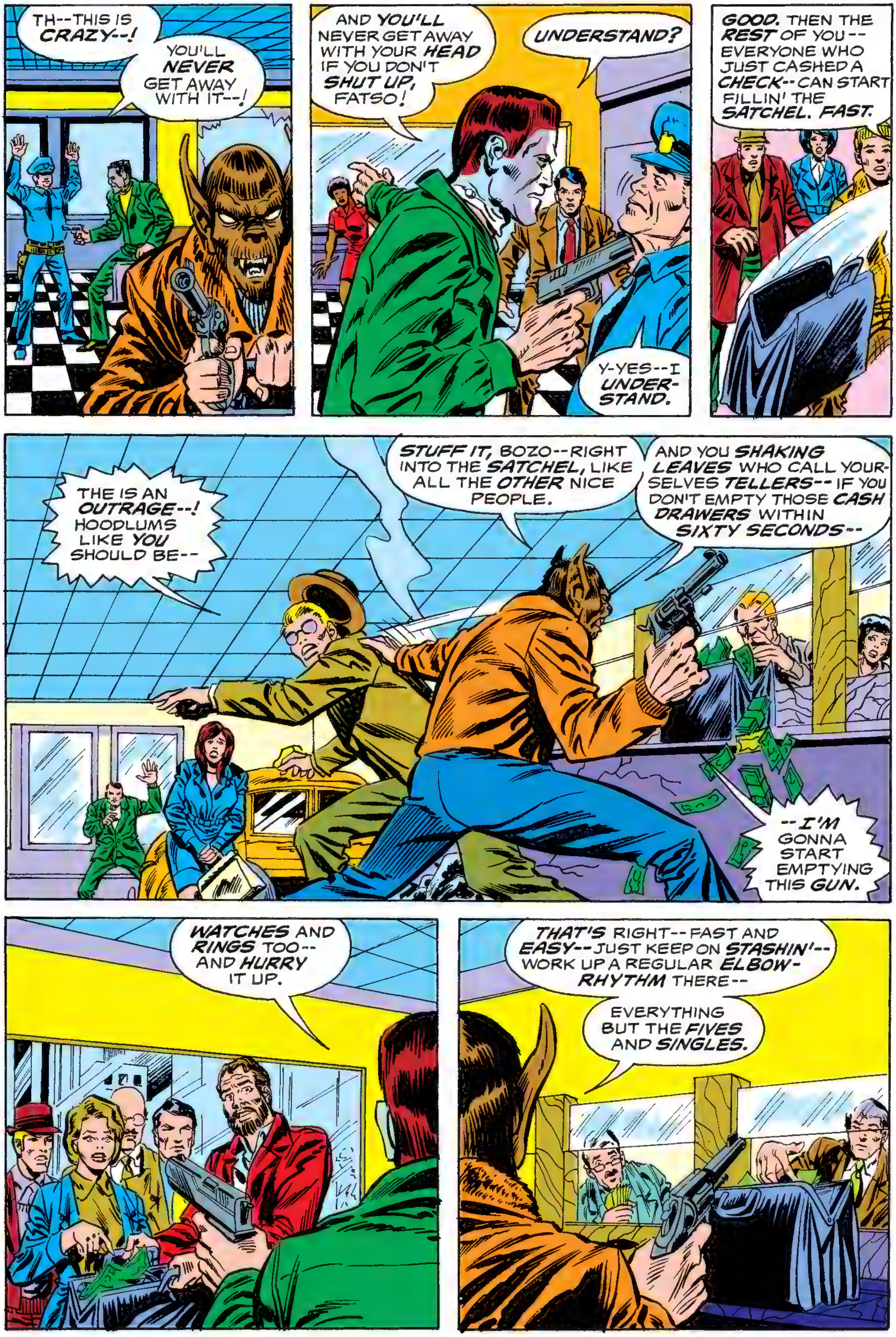
WITHOUT DOUBT, THE MOST BIZARRE, OFFBEAT, THRILL-PACKED SHANG-CHI EPIC YET! COMPLIMENTS OF:

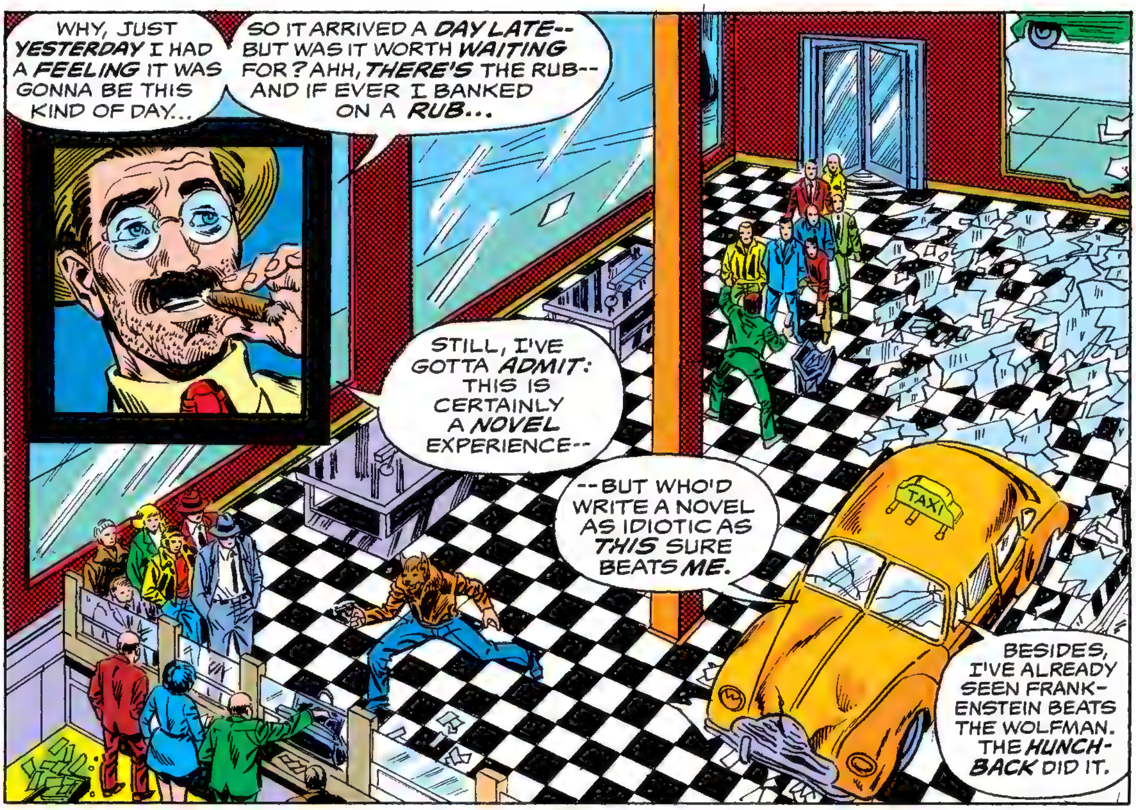
DOUG MOENCH • WRITER
KEITH POLLARD • ARTIST
SAL TRAPANI • INKER
RAY HOLLOWAY • LETTERER
JANICE COHEN • COLORIST
LEN WEIN • EDITOR

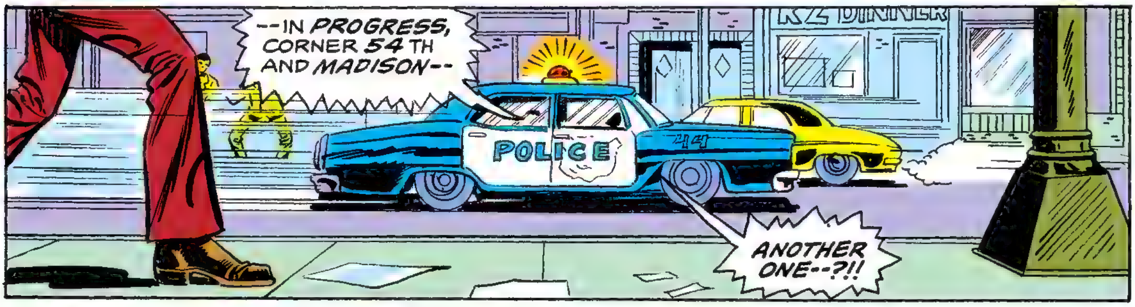
FEATURING SUPPORTING CHARACTERS CREATED BY SAX ROHMER

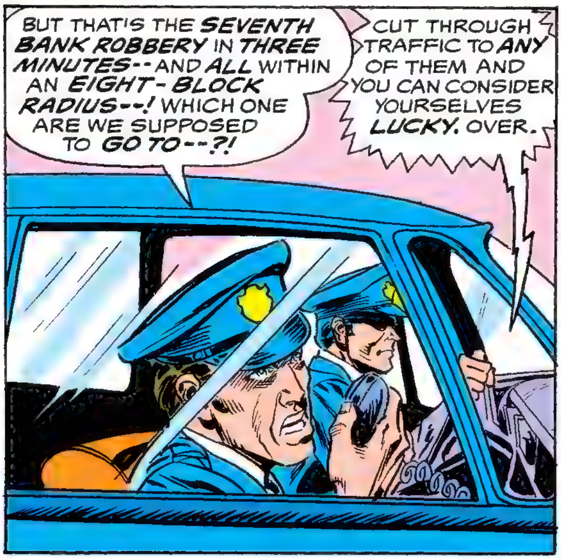

Y'KNOW, ONCE YA GET THE *HANG* OF THIS, IT KINDA *GROWS* ON YA--
--LIKE *MOSS.*
AND WHO KNOWS *WHAT* KINDA MOSS WE MIGHT ATTRACT IF WE WEREN'T *ROLLIN'* SO FAST...
SHUT UP AND *DRIVE!*
IRON FIST
Y'KNOW, MY UNCLE LOST HIS *BEST SUIT* TO SOME MOSS ONE TIME--
--*AMBUSHED* IT RIGHT THERE IN THE *CLOSET* WHERE EAST MEETS *VEST.*
FASTER, YOU BABBLING *CLOWN!!*
FASTER--? CLOWN--?! WHY IF THIS CLOWN WERE GOING ANY *FASTER,* MY TRANSMISSION WOULD *TURN* ON ME--AND WHAT'S A *CLOWN* WITHOUT HIS *TRANSMISSION--?!*
--OR A *DIVORCE* WITHOUT A *CARRIAGE,* FOR *THAT* MATTER!
AUBREY'S
REAL MEXICAN FOOD
TAXI
WALK
Y'KNOW, IF I WAS JUST *HALF* A MAN--
RACING FORM
--I'D HAVE A *FLAT TIRE* RIGHT ABOUT NOW.
OPTIONAL TIPPING MANDITORY FREELOADER
WHADDAYA HAVE TO SAY ABOUT *THAT?*
KLIK
W-WELL, WHY DIDN'T YA (ULP!) SAY SO?
IF IT'S *SPEED* YA WANT--
--*RUFUS T. HACKSTABBER'S HANDEE-DANDEE TAXI SERVICE* WAS *FOUNDED* ON SPEED!
HANG A *LEFT--* A *SHARP* ONE AND *DON'T SLOW DOWN.*
A *LEFT--?* BUT WE'LL NEVER *MAKE* IT--WE ALREADY *PASSED* THE CORNER--!
YOU *HEARD* THE *CLICK.* WANNA HEAR THE *BOOM?*

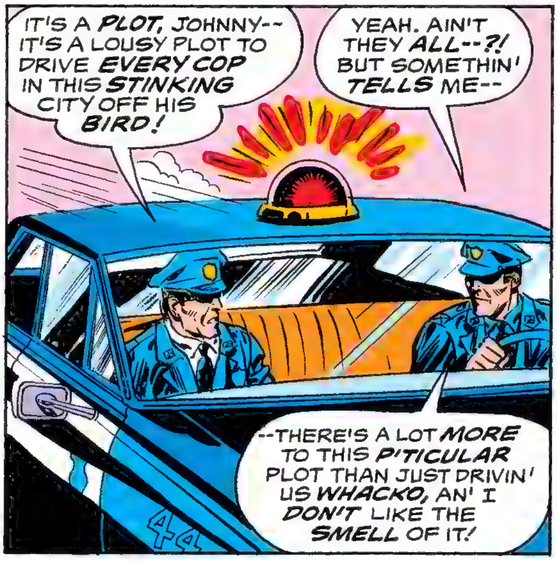

SPRAK
NO-- NO NEED TO BOOM--!
IF IT'S A LEFT YA WANT!
SKREEEE
NO PARKING POLICE DEPT
!!--?!
KRASHH!
FEB.
YAAHHH
I'VE HEARD OF THE STOCKMARKET CRASH--AND RUNS ON THE BANK--
BUT THIS IS RIDICULOUS.
FREEZE!!
NOBODY MOVES, NOBODY DIES. THIS IS A HOLD-UP--
--BUT WE'D LIKE TO CONDUCT IT ON BUSINESS TERMS.
1003

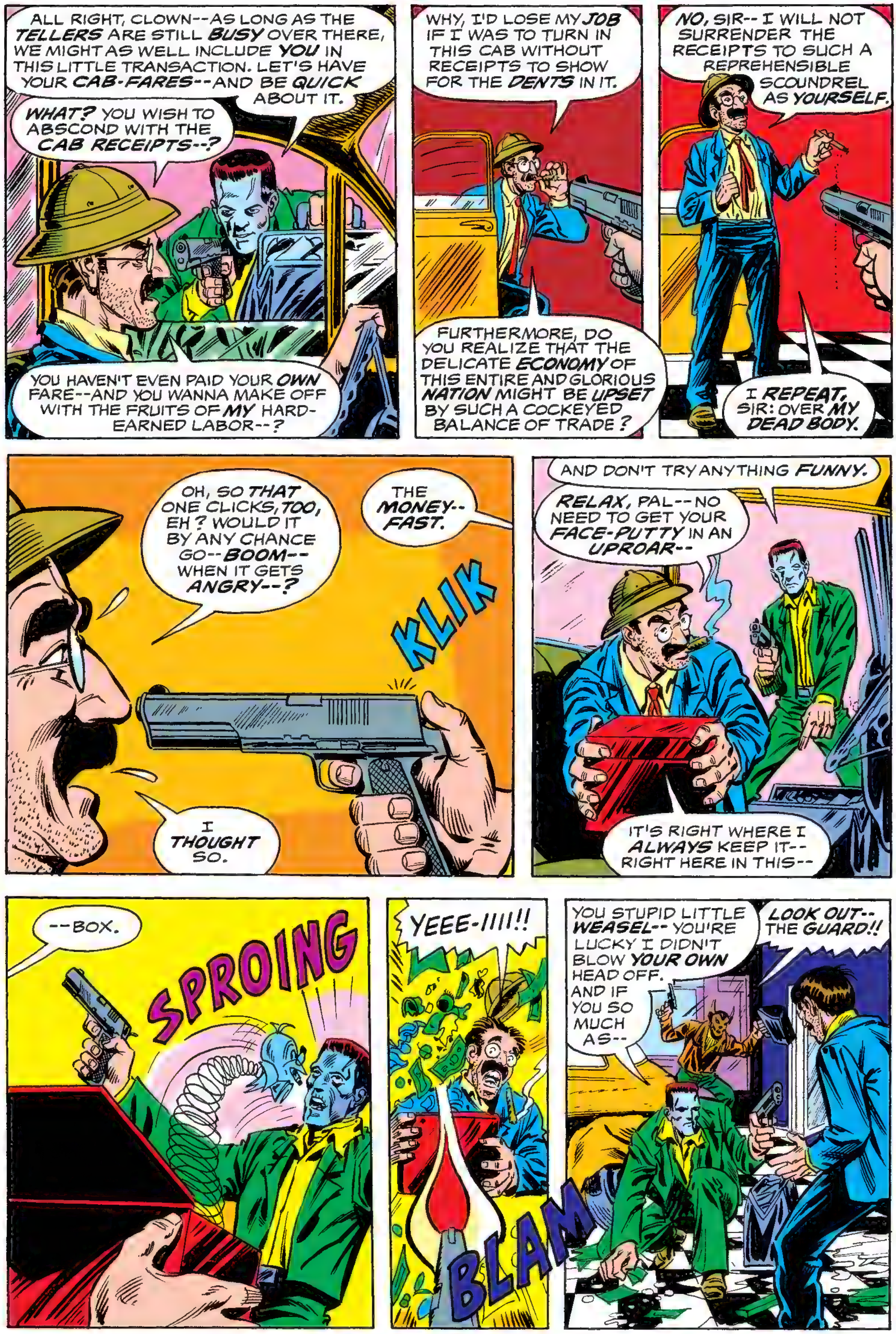

TH--THIS IS CRAZY--!
YOU'LL NEVER GET AWAY WITH IT--!
AND YOU'LL NEVER GET AWAY WITH YOUR HEAD IF YOU DON'T SHUT UP, FATSO!
UNDERSTAND?
Y-YES--I UNDERSTAND.
GOOD. THEN THE REST OF YOU--EVERYONE WHO JUST CASHED A CHECK--CAN START FILLIN' THE SATCHEL. FAST.
THE IS AN OUTRAGE--! HOODLUMS LIKE YOU SHOULD BE--
STUFF IT, BOZO--RIGHT INTO THE SATCHEL, LIKE ALL THE OTHER NICE PEOPLE.
AND YOU SHAKING LEAVES WHO CALL YOURSELVES TELLERS--IF YOU DON'T EMPTY THOSE CASH DRAWERS WITHIN SIXTY SECONDS--
--I'M GONNA START EMPTYING THIS GUN.
WATCHES AND RINGS TOO--AND HURRY IT UP.
THAT'S RIGHT--FAST AND EASY--JUST KEEP ON STASHIN'--WORK UP A REGULAR ELBOW-RHYTHM THERE--
EVERYTHING BUT THE FIVES AND SINGLES.

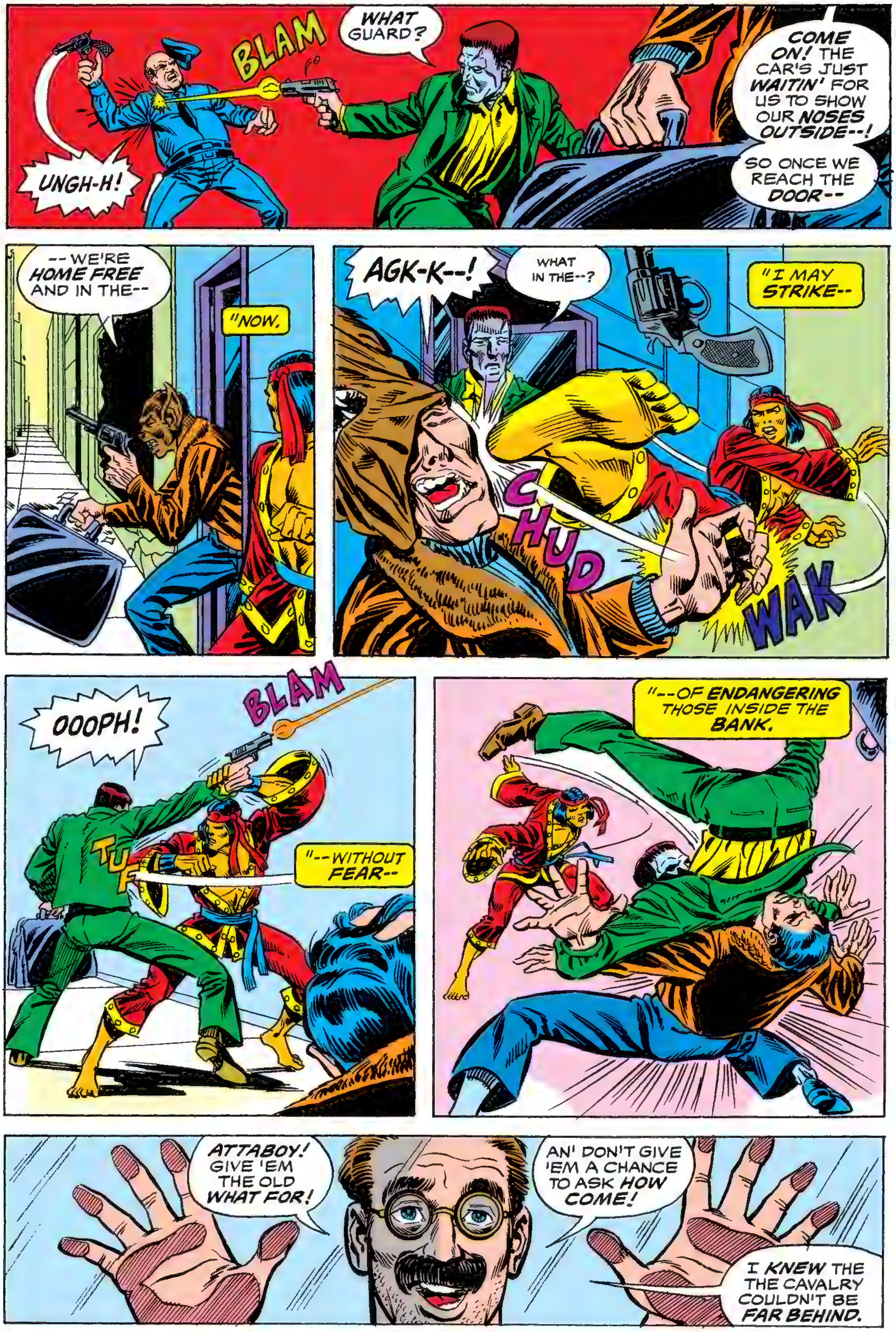

WHY, JUST *YESTERDAY* I HAD A *FEELING* IT WAS GONNA BE THIS KIND OF DAY...
SO IT ARRIVED A *DAY LATE*-- BUT WAS IT WORTH *WAITING* FOR? AHH, *THERE'S* THE RUB-- AND IF EVER I BANKED ON A *RUB...*
STILL, I'VE GOTTA *ADMIT:* THIS IS CERTAINLY A *NOVEL* EXPERIENCE--
--BUT WHO'D WRITE A NOVEL AS IDIOTIC AS *THIS* SURE BEATS *ME.*
BESIDES, I'VE ALREADY SEEN FRANKENSTEIN BEATS THE WOLFMAN. THE *HUNCHBACK* DID IT.
TAXI

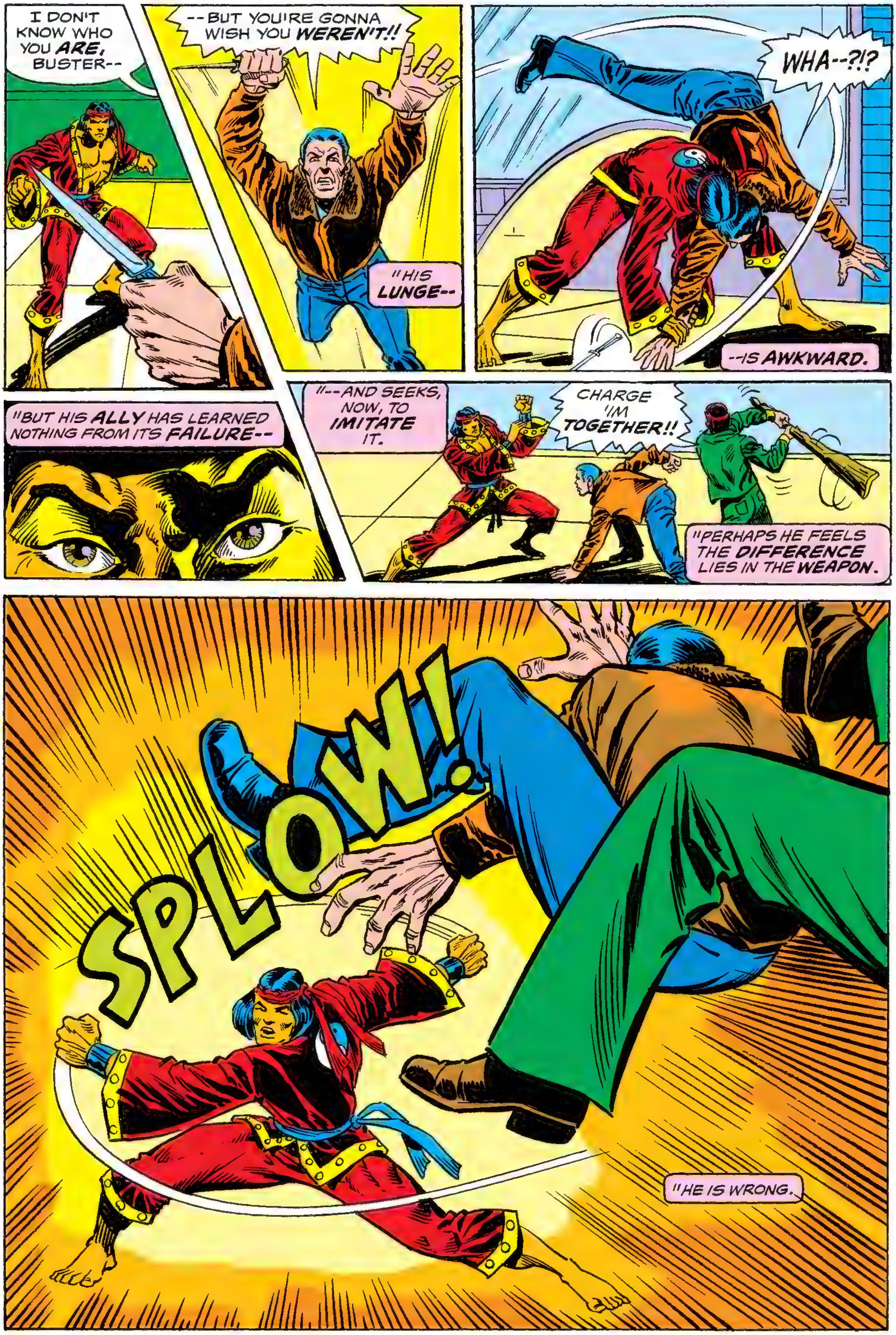

--IN *PROGRESS,* CORNER *54* TH AND *MADISON*--
KZ DINER
POLICE
44
ANOTHER ONE--?!!

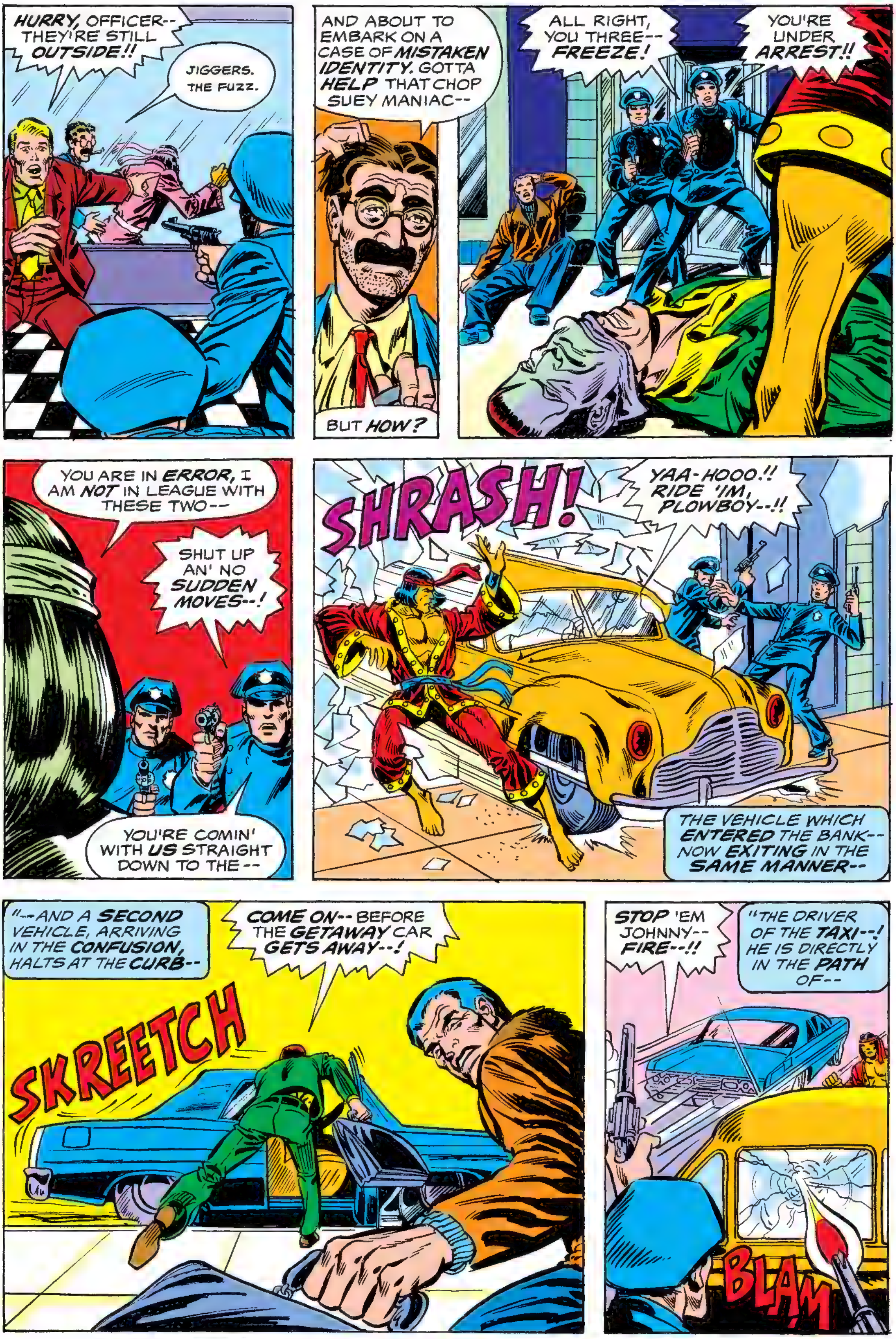

BUT THAT'S THE *SEVENTH BANK ROBBERY* IN *THREE MINUTES*-- AND *ALL* WITHIN AN *EIGHT-BLOCK RADIUS*--! WHICH ONE ARE WE SUPPOSED TO *GO TO*--?!
CUT THROUGH TRAFFIC TO *ANY* OF THEM AND YOU CAN CONSIDER YOURSELVES *LUCKY.* OVER.

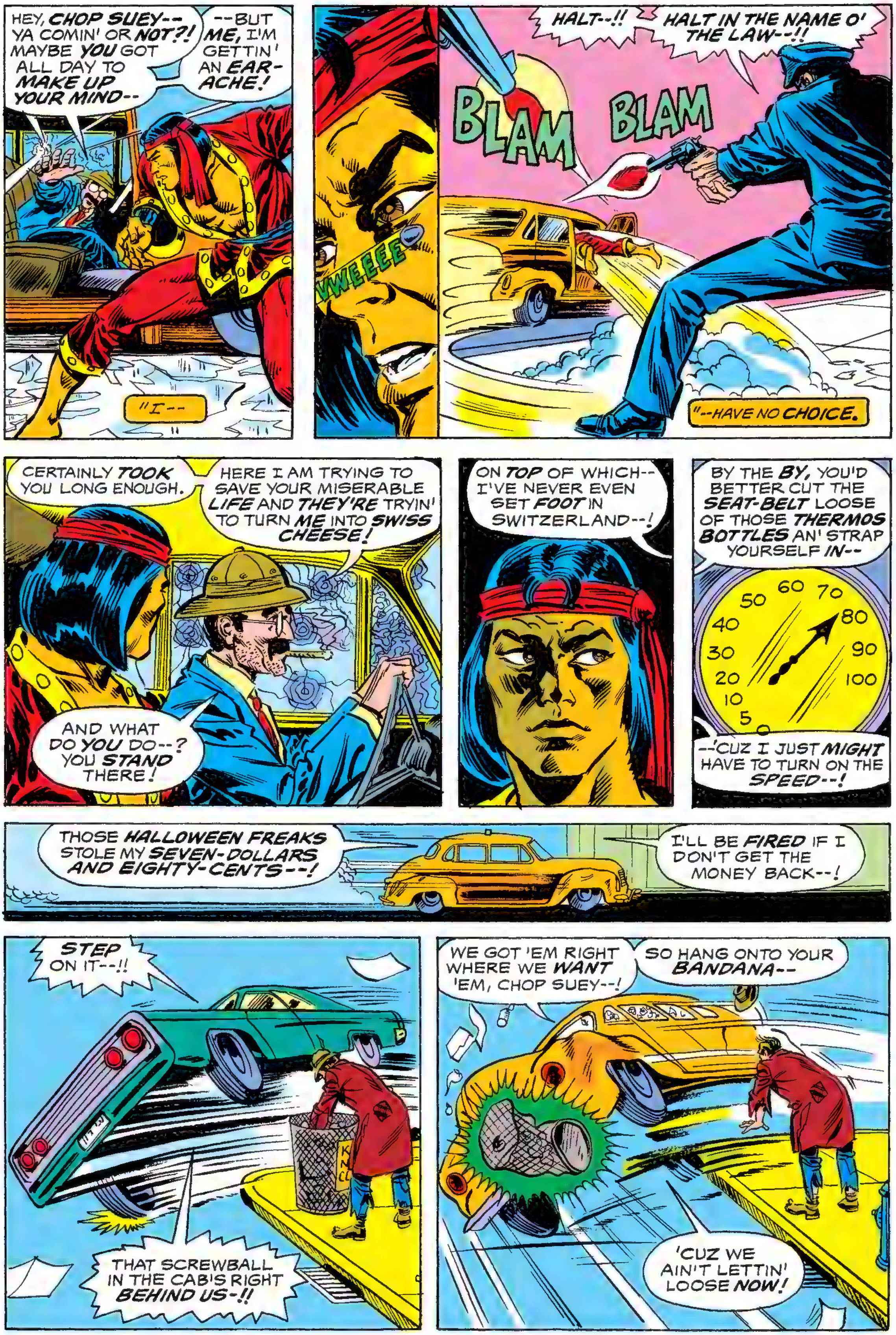

IT'S A *PLOT,* JOHNNY-- IT'S A LOUSY PLOT TO DRIVE *EVERY COP* IN THIS *STINKING* CITY OFF HIS *BIRD!*
YEAH. AIN'T THEY *ALL*--?! BUT SOMETHIN' *TELLS* ME--
--THERE'S A LOT *MORE* TO THIS *P'TICULAR* PLOT THAN JUST DRIVIN' US *WHACKO,* AN' I *DON'T* LIKE THE *SMELL* OF IT!
44

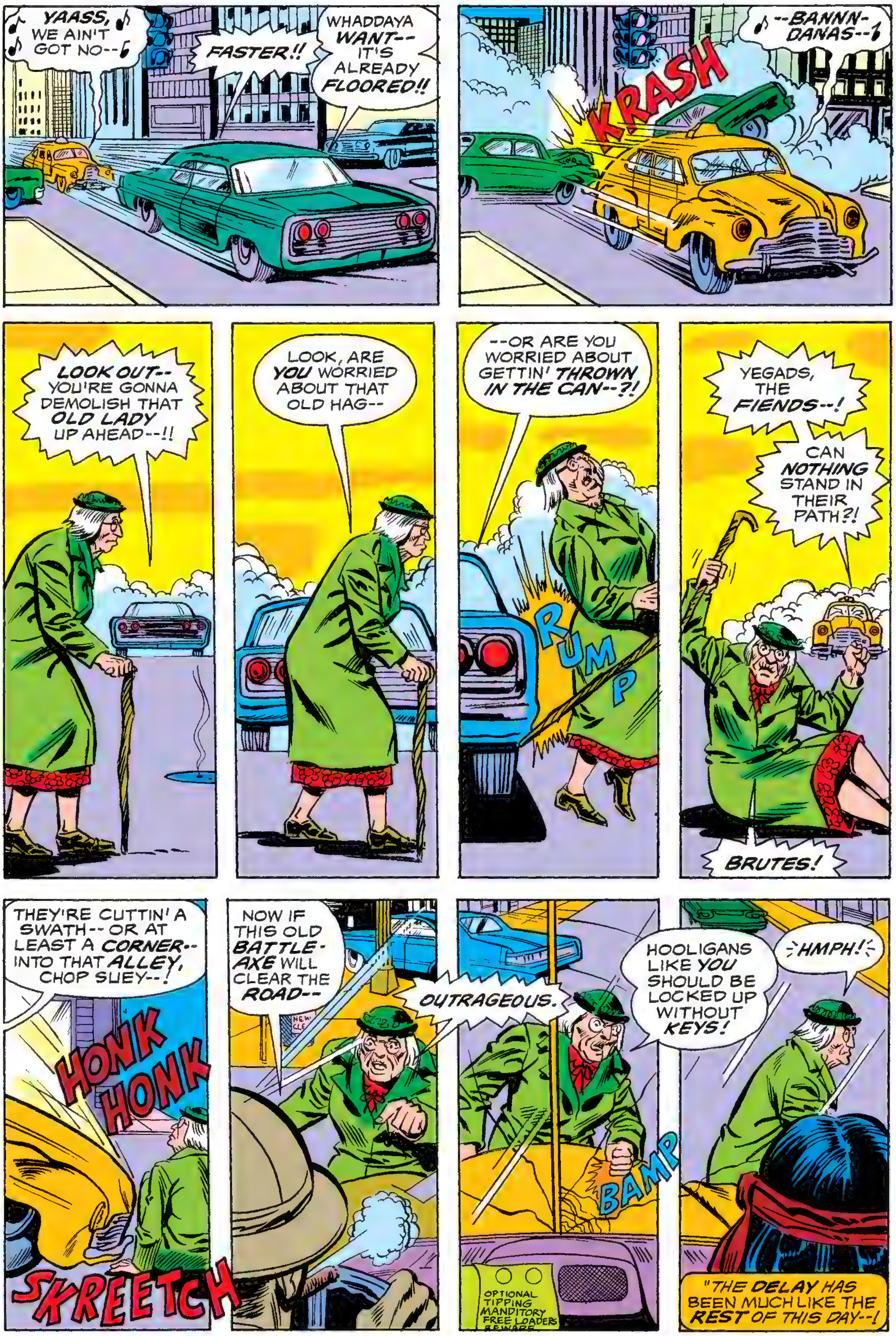

ALL RIGHT, CLOWN--AS LONG AS THE *TELLERS* ARE STILL *BUSY* OVER THERE, WE MIGHT AS WELL INCLUDE *YOU* IN THIS LITTLE TRANSACTION. LET'S HAVE YOUR *CAB-FARES*--AND BE *QUICK* ABOUT IT.
WHAT? YOU WISH TO ABSCOND WITH THE *CAB RECEIPTS*--?
YOU HAVEN'T EVEN PAID YOUR *OWN* FARE--AND YOU WANNA MAKE OFF WITH THE FRUITS OF *MY* HARD-EARNED LABOR--?
WHY, I'D LOSE MY *JOB* IF I WAS TO TURN IN THIS CAB WITHOUT RECEIPTS TO SHOW FOR THE *DENTS* IN IT.
FURTHERMORE, DO YOU REALIZE THAT THE DELICATE *ECONOMY* OF THIS ENTIRE AND GLORIOUS *NATION* MIGHT BE *UPSET* BY SUCH A COCKEYED BALANCE OF TRADE?
NO, SIR-- I WILL NOT SURRENDER THE RECEIPTS TO SUCH A REPREHENSIBLE SCOUNDREL AS *YOURSELF.*
I *REPEAT,* SIR: OVER *MY DEAD BODY.*
OH, SO *THAT* ONE CLICKS, *TOO,* EH? WOULD IT BY ANY CHANCE GO--*BOOM*--WHEN IT GETS *ANGRY*--?
THE *MONEY*-- *FAST.*
KLIK
I *THOUGHT* SO.
AND DON'T TRY ANYTHING *FUNNY.*
RELAX, PAL--NO NEED TO GET YOUR *FACE-PUTTY* IN AN *UPROAR*--
IT'S RIGHT WHERE I *ALWAYS* KEEP IT--RIGHT HERE IN THIS--
--BOX.
SPROING
YEEE-IIII!!
BLAM
YOU STUPID LITTLE *WEASEL*-- YOU'RE LUCKY I DIDN'T BLOW *YOUR OWN* HEAD OFF. AND IF YOU SO MUCH AS--
LOOK OUT-- THE *GUARD!!*

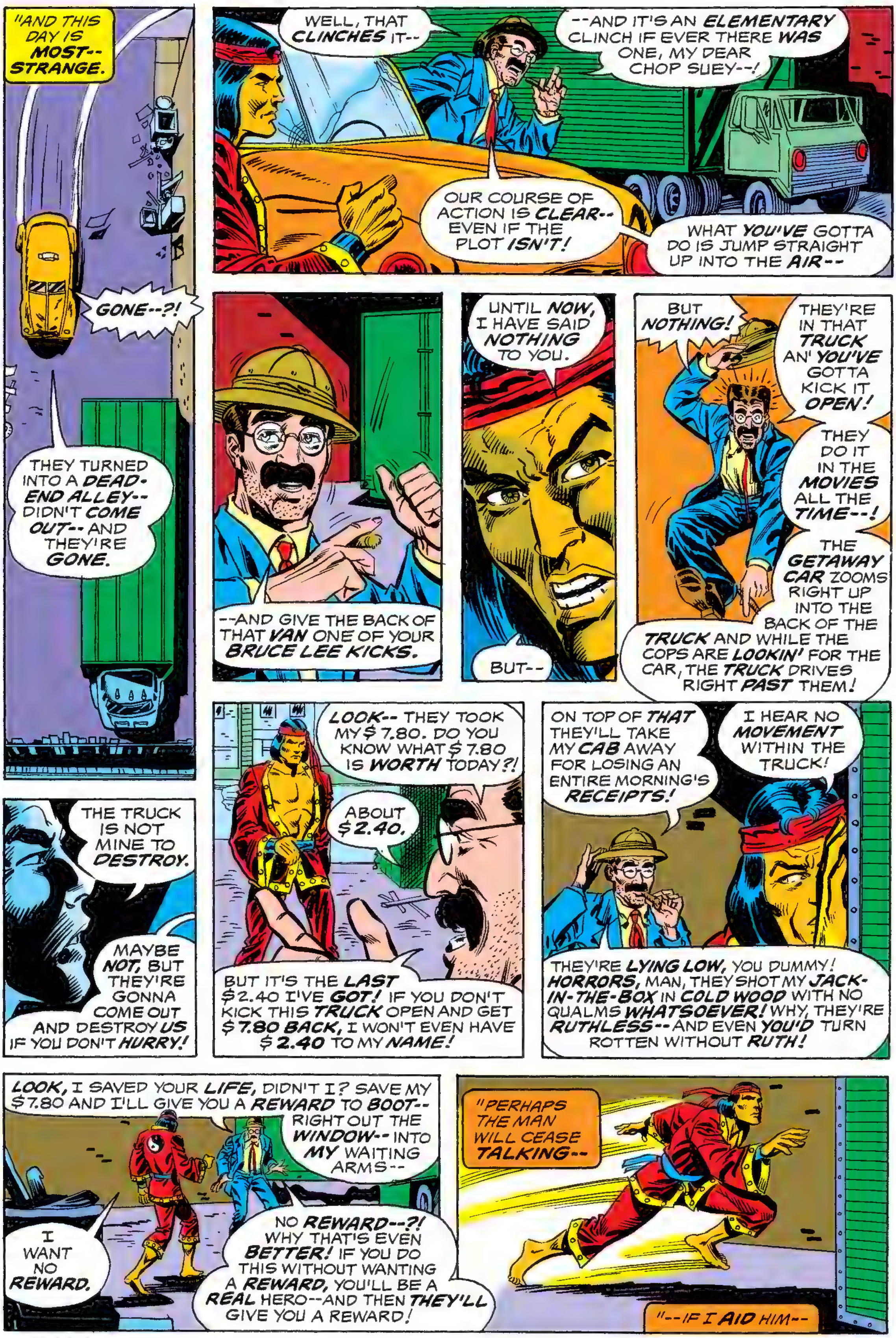

BLAM
UNGH-H!
WHAT GUARD?
COME ON! THE CAR'S JUST WAITIN' FOR US TO SHOW OUR NOSES OUTSIDE--!
SO ONCE WE REACH THE DOOR--
--WE'RE HOME FREE AND IN THE--
"NOW,
AGK-K--!
WHAT IN THE--?
"I MAY STRIKE--
CHUD
WAK
OOOPH!
BLAM
"--WITHOUT FEAR--
"--OF ENDANGERING THOSE INSIDE THE BANK.
ATTABOY! GIVE 'EM THE OLD WHAT FOR!
AN' DON'T GIVE 'EM A CHANCE TO ASK HOW COME!
I KNEW THE THE CAVALRY COULDN'T BE FAR BEHIND.

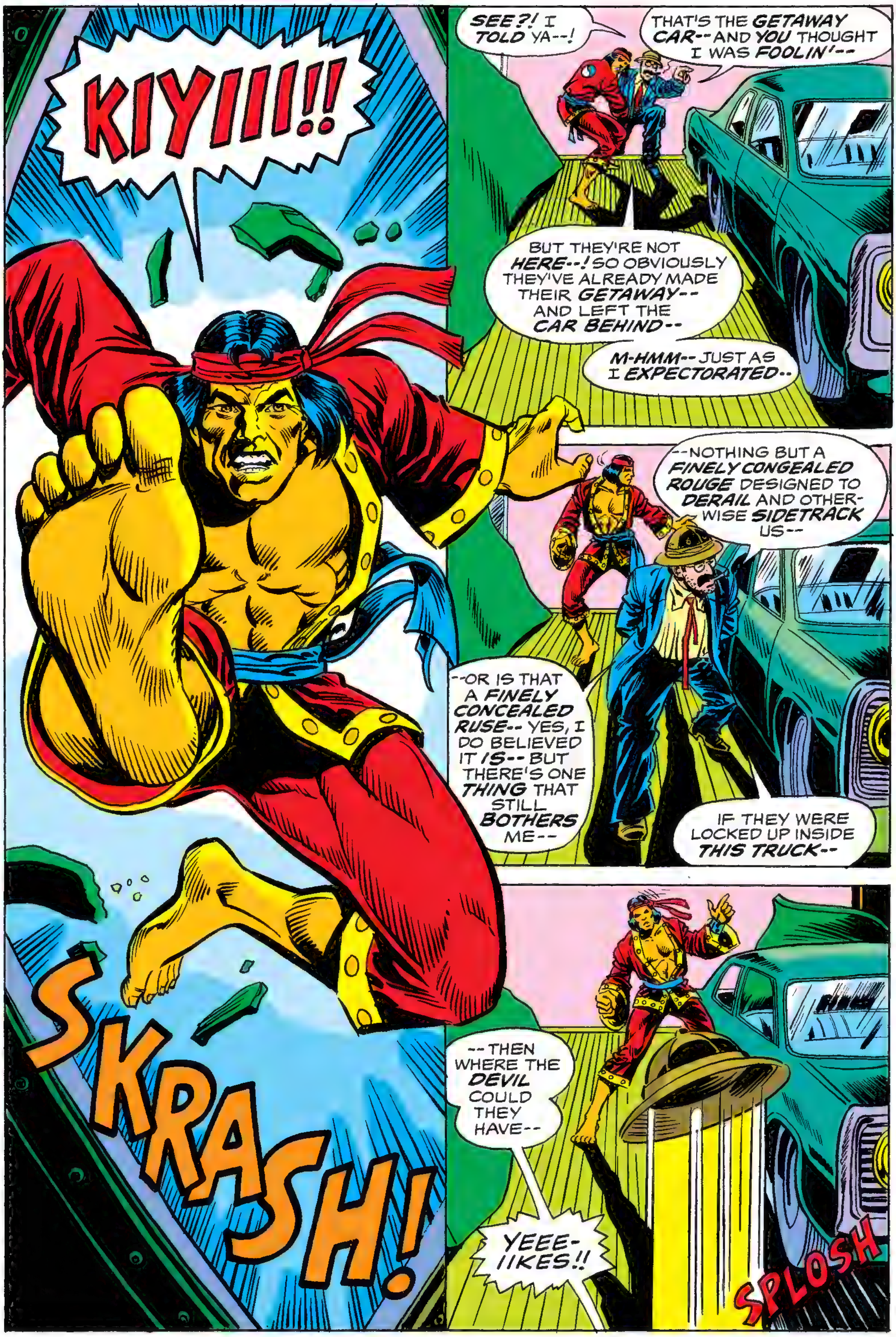

I DON'T KNOW WHO YOU *ARE,* BUSTER--
--BUT YOU'RE GONNA WISH YOU *WEREN'T!!*
"HIS *LUNGE--*
WHA--?!?
--IS *AWKWARD.*
"BUT HIS *ALLY* HAS LEARNED NOTHING FROM ITS *FAILURE--*
"--AND SEEKS, NOW, TO *IMITATE* IT.
CHARGE 'IM *TOGETHER!!*
"PERHAPS HE FEELS THE *DIFFERENCE* LIES IN THE *WEAPON.*
SPLOW!
"HE IS WRONG.

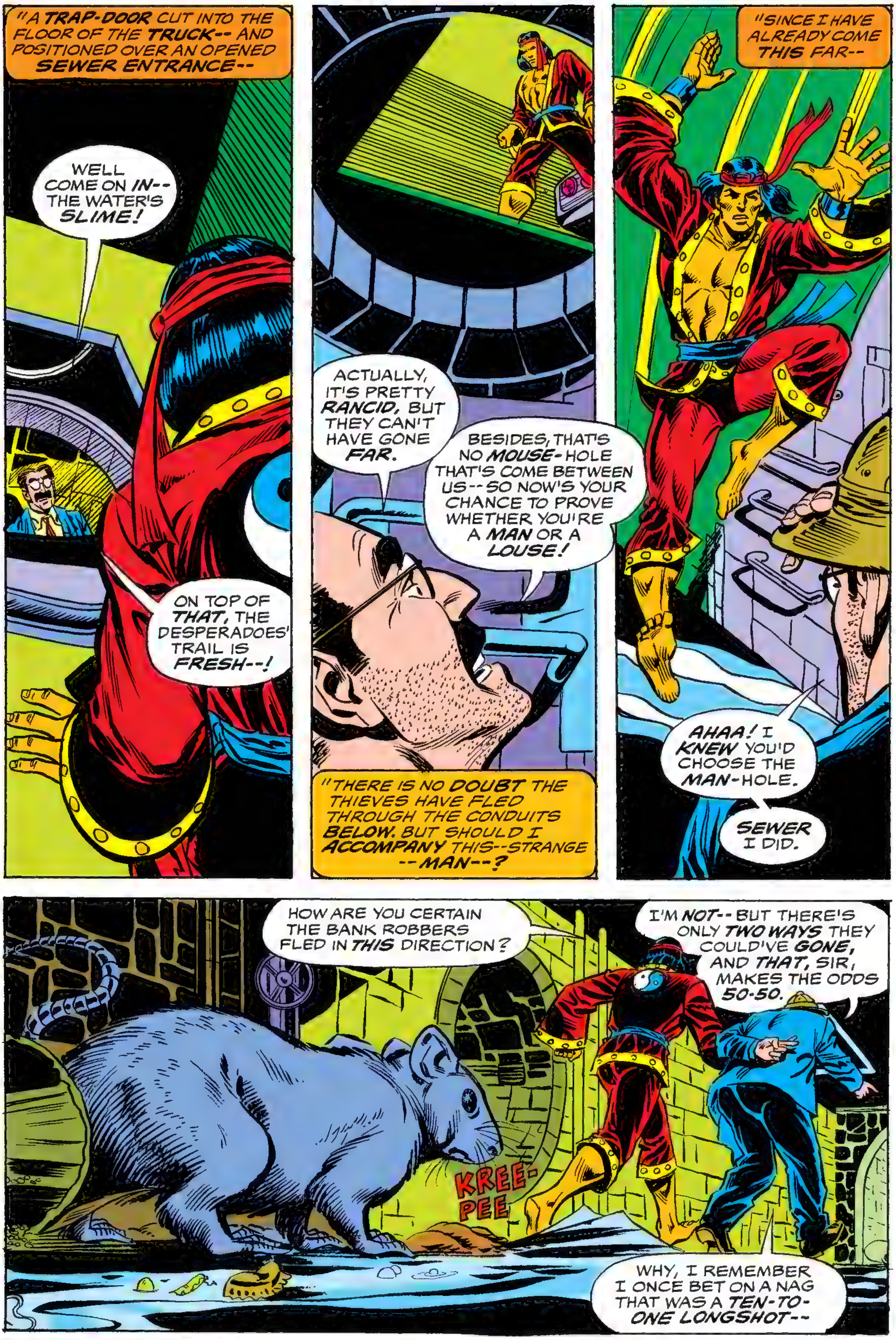

HURRY, OFFICER--THEY'RE STILL OUTSIDE!!
JIGGERS. THE FUZZ.
AND ABOUT TO EMBARK ON A CASE OF MISTAKEN IDENTITY. GOTTA HELP THAT CHOP SUEY MANIAC--
BUT HOW?
ALL RIGHT, YOU THREE--FREEZE!
YOU'RE UNDER ARREST!!
YOU ARE IN ERROR, I AM NOT IN LEAGUE WITH THESE TWO--
SHUT UP AN' NO SUDDEN MOVES--!
YOU'RE COMIN' WITH US STRAIGHT DOWN TO THE--
SHRASH!
YAA-HOOO!! RIDE 'IM, PLOWBOY--!!
THE VEHICLE WHICH ENTERED THE BANK--NOW EXITING IN THE SAME MANNER--
"--AND A SECOND VEHICLE, ARRIVING IN THE CONFUSION, HALTS AT THE CURB--
COME ON--BEFORE THE GETAWAY CAR GETS AWAY--!
SKREETCH
STOP 'EM JOHNNY--FIRE--!!
"THE DRIVER OF THE TAXI--! HE IS DIRECTLY IN THE PATH OF--
BLAM

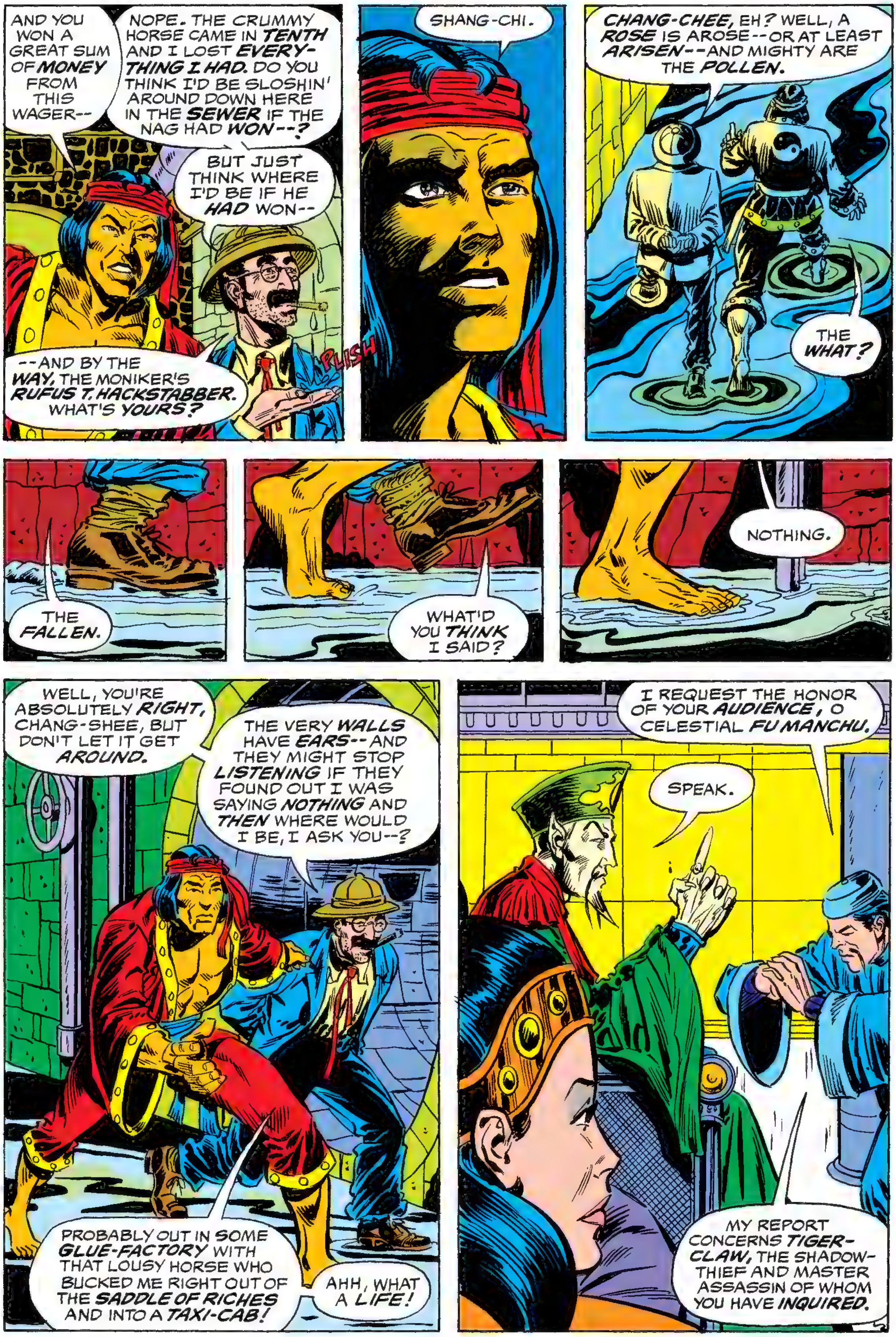

HEY, CHOP SUEY-- YA COMIN' OR NOT?! MAYBE YOU GOT ALL DAY TO MAKE UP YOUR MIND--
--BUT ME, I'M GETTIN' AN EAR-ACHE!
"I--
VWEEEE
HALT--!!
HALT IN THE NAME O' THE LAW--!!
BLAM
BLAM
"--HAVE NO CHOICE.
CERTAINLY TOOK YOU LONG ENOUGH.
HERE I AM TRYING TO SAVE YOUR MISERABLE LIFE AND THEY'RE TRYIN' TO TURN ME INTO SWISS CHEESE!
AND WHAT DO YOU DO--? YOU STAND THERE!
ON TOP OF WHICH-- I'VE NEVER EVEN SET FOOT IN SWITZERLAND--!
BY THE BY, YOU'D BETTER CUT THE SEAT-BELT LOOSE OF THOSE THERMOS BOTTLES AN' STRAP YOURSELF IN--
5 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100
--'CUZ I JUST MIGHT HAVE TO TURN ON THE SPEED--!
THOSE HALLOWEEN FREAKS STOLE MY SEVEN-DOLLARS AND EIGHTY-CENTS--!
I'LL BE FIRED IF I DON'T GET THE MONEY BACK--!
STEP ON IT--!!
THAT SCREWBALL IN THE CAB'S RIGHT BEHIND US-!!
WE GOT 'EM RIGHT WHERE WE WANT 'EM, CHOP SUEY--!
SO HANG ONTO YOUR BANDANA--
'CUZ WE AIN'T LETTIN' LOOSE NOW!

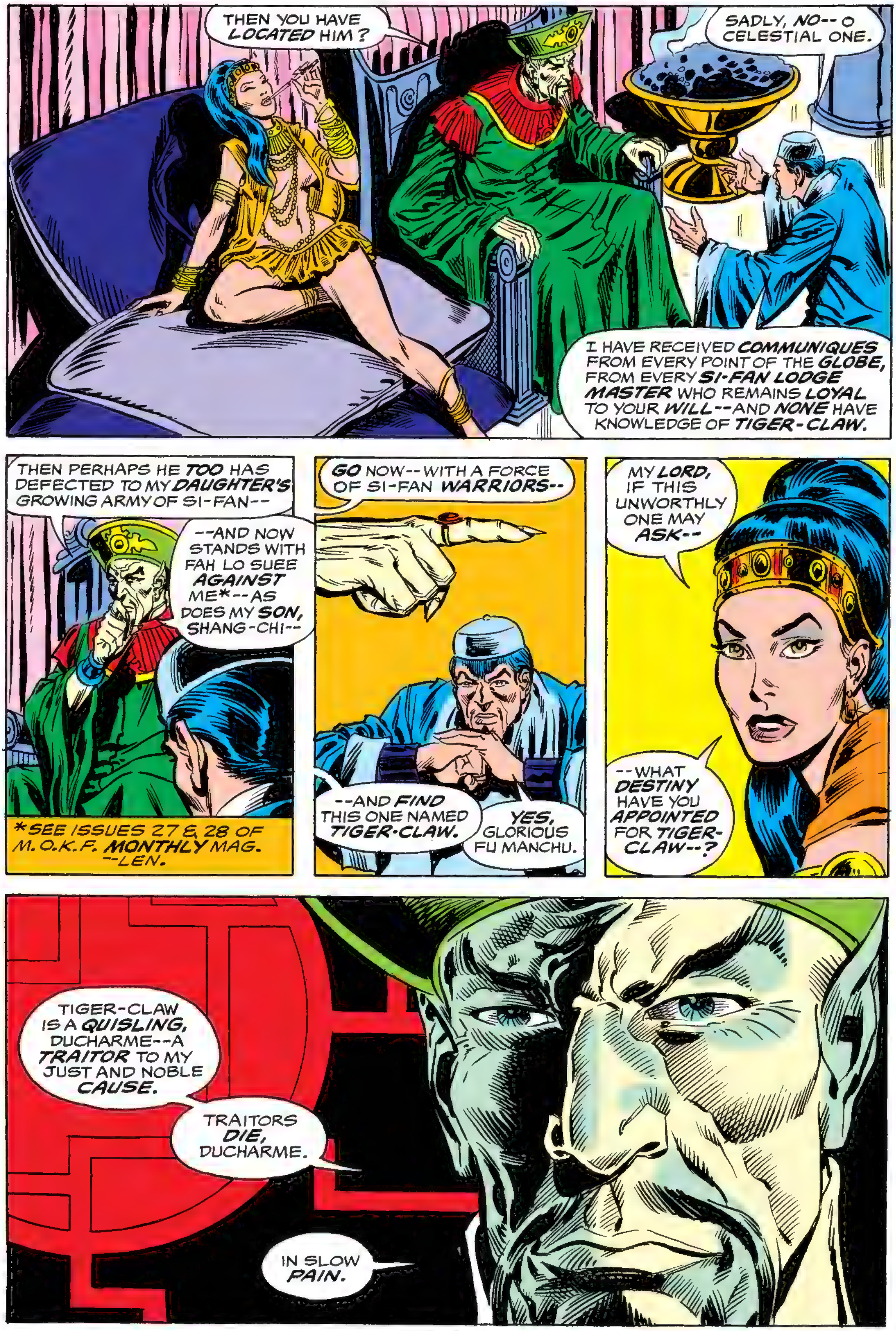

♪ YAASS, ♪ WE AIN'T ♪ GOT NO-- ♪
FASTER!!
WHADDAYA WANT-- IT'S ALREADY FLOORED!!
KRASH
♪ --BANNN-DANAS-- ♪
LOOK OUT-- YOU'RE GONNA DEMOLISH THAT OLD LADY UP AHEAD--!!
LOOK, ARE YOU WORRIED ABOUT THAT OLD HAG--
--OR ARE YOU WORRIED ABOUT GETTIN' THROWN IN THE CAN--?!
RUMP
YEGADS, THE FIENDS--!
CAN NOTHING STAND IN THEIR PATH?!
BRUTES!
THEY'RE CUTTIN' A SWATH-- OR AT LEAST A CORNER-- INTO THAT ALLEY, CHOP SUEY--!
HONK HONK
SKREETCH
NOW IF THIS OLD BATTLE-AXE WILL CLEAR THE ROAD--
OUTRAGEOUS.
HOOLIGANS LIKE YOU SHOULD BE LOCKED UP WITHOUT KEYS!
BAMP
OPTIONAL TIPPING MANDITORY FREE LOADERS BEWARE
HMPH!
"THE DELAY HAS BEEN MUCH LIKE THE REST OF THIS DAY--!

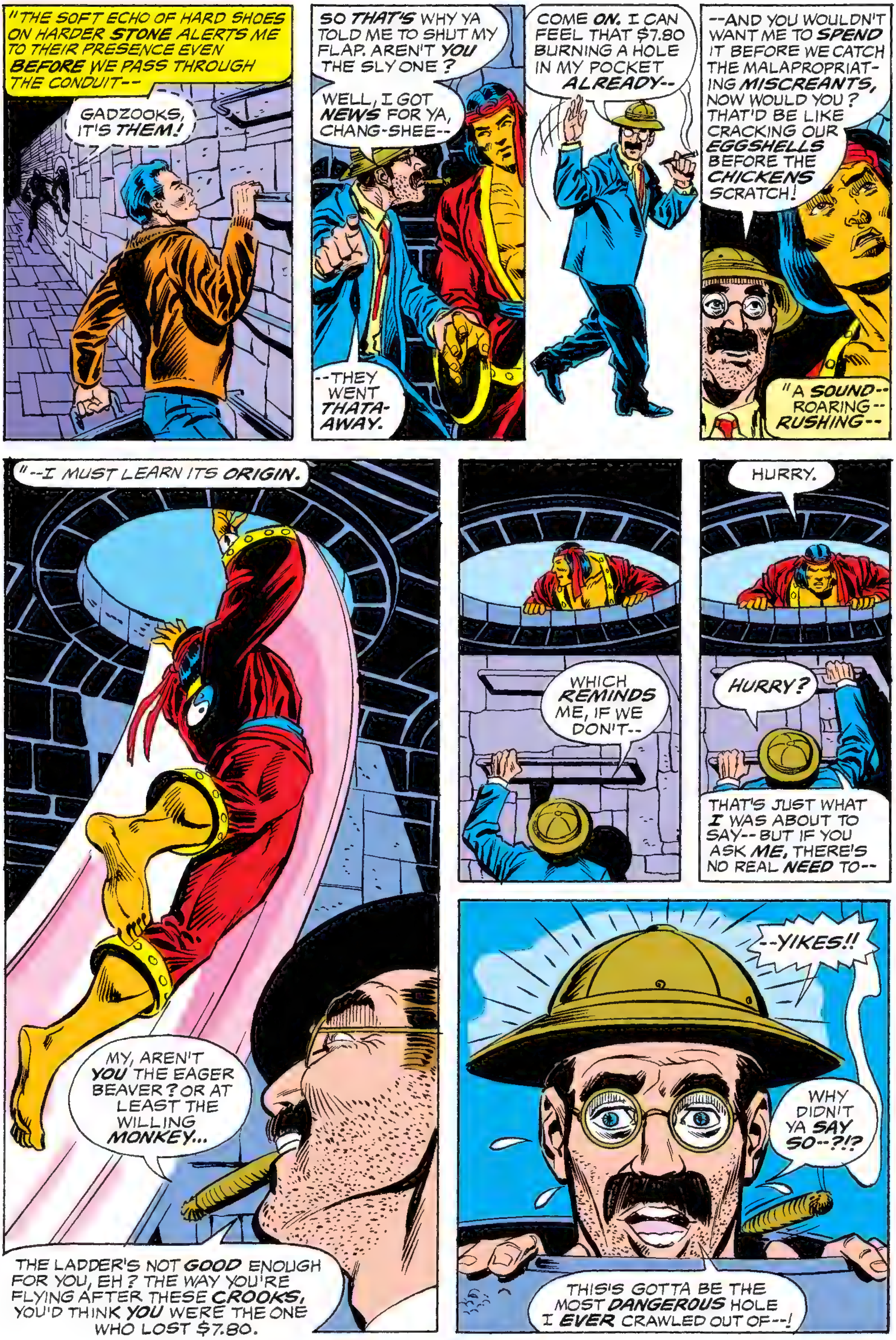

"AND THIS DAY IS MOST-- STRANGE.
GONE--?!
THEY TURNED INTO A DEAD-END ALLEY-- DIDN'T COME OUT-- AND THEY'RE GONE.
WELL, THAT CLINCHES IT--
--AND IT'S AN ELEMENTARY CLINCH IF EVER THERE WAS ONE, MY DEAR CHOP SUEY--!
OUR COURSE OF ACTION IS CLEAR-- EVEN IF THE PLOT ISN'T!
WHAT YOU'VE GOTTA DO IS JUMP STRAIGHT UP INTO THE AIR--
--AND GIVE THE BACK OF THAT VAN ONE OF YOUR BRUCE LEE KICKS.
UNTIL NOW, I HAVE SAID NOTHING TO YOU.
BUT--
BUT NOTHING!
THEY'RE IN THAT TRUCK AN' YOU'VE GOTTA KICK IT OPEN!
THEY DO IT IN THE MOVIES ALL THE TIME--!
THE GETAWAY CAR ZOOMS RIGHT UP INTO THE BACK OF THE TRUCK AND WHILE THE COPS ARE LOOKIN' FOR THE CAR, THE TRUCK DRIVES RIGHT PAST THEM!
THE TRUCK IS NOT MINE TO DESTROY.
MAYBE NOT, BUT THEY'RE GONNA COME OUT AND DESTROY US IF YOU DON'T HURRY!
LOOK-- THEY TOOK MY $7.80. DO YOU KNOW WHAT $7.80 IS WORTH TODAY?!
ABOUT $2.40.
BUT IT'S THE LAST $2.40 I'VE GOT! IF YOU DON'T KICK THIS TRUCK OPEN AND GET $7.80 BACK, I WON'T EVEN HAVE $2.40 TO MY NAME!
ON TOP OF THAT THEY'LL TAKE MY CAB AWAY FOR LOSING AN ENTIRE MORNING'S RECEIPTS!
I HEAR NO MOVEMENT WITHIN THE TRUCK!
THEY'RE LYING LOW, YOU DUMMY! HORRORS, MAN, THEY SHOT MY JACK-IN-THE-BOX IN COLD WOOD WITH NO QUALMS WHATSOEVER! WHY, THEY'RE RUTHLESS--AND EVEN YOU'D TURN ROTTEN WITHOUT RUTH!
LOOK, I SAVED YOUR LIFE, DIDN'T I? SAVE MY $7.80 AND I'LL GIVE YOU A REWARD TO BOOT-- RIGHT OUT THE WINDOW-- INTO MY WAITING ARMS--
I WANT NO REWARD.
NO REWARD--?! WHY THAT'S EVEN BETTER! IF YOU DO THIS WITHOUT WANTING A REWARD, YOU'LL BE A REAL HERO--AND THEN THEY'LL GIVE YOU A REWARD!
"PERHAPS THE MAN WILL CEASE TALKING--
"--IF I AID HIM--

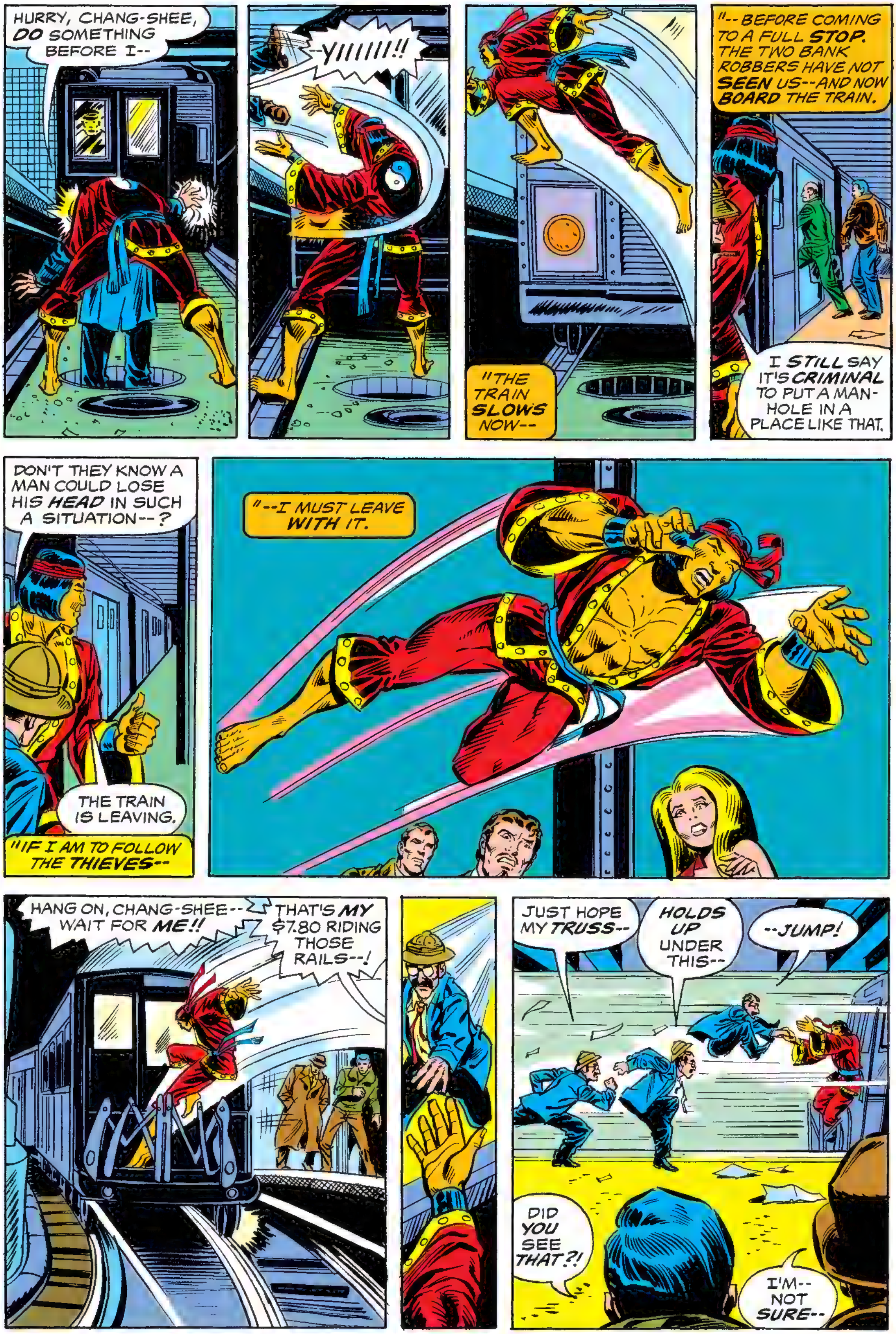

KIYIII!!
SKRASH!
SEE?! I TOLD YA--!
THAT'S THE GETAWAY CAR-- AND YOU THOUGHT I WAS FOOLIN'--
BUT THEY'RE NOT HERE--! SO OBVIOUSLY THEY'VE ALREADY MADE THEIR GETAWAY-- AND LEFT THE CAR BEHIND--
M-HMM-- JUST AS I EXPECTORATED--
--NOTHING BUT A FINELY CONGEALED ROUGE DESIGNED TO DERAIL AND OTHERWISE SIDETRACK US--
--OR IS THAT A FINELY CONCEALED RUSE-- YES, I DO BELIEVED IT IS-- BUT THERE'S ONE THING THAT STILL BOTHERS ME--
IF THEY WERE LOCKED UP INSIDE THIS TRUCK--
--THEN WHERE THE DEVIL COULD THEY HAVE--
YEEE-IIKES!!
SPLOSH

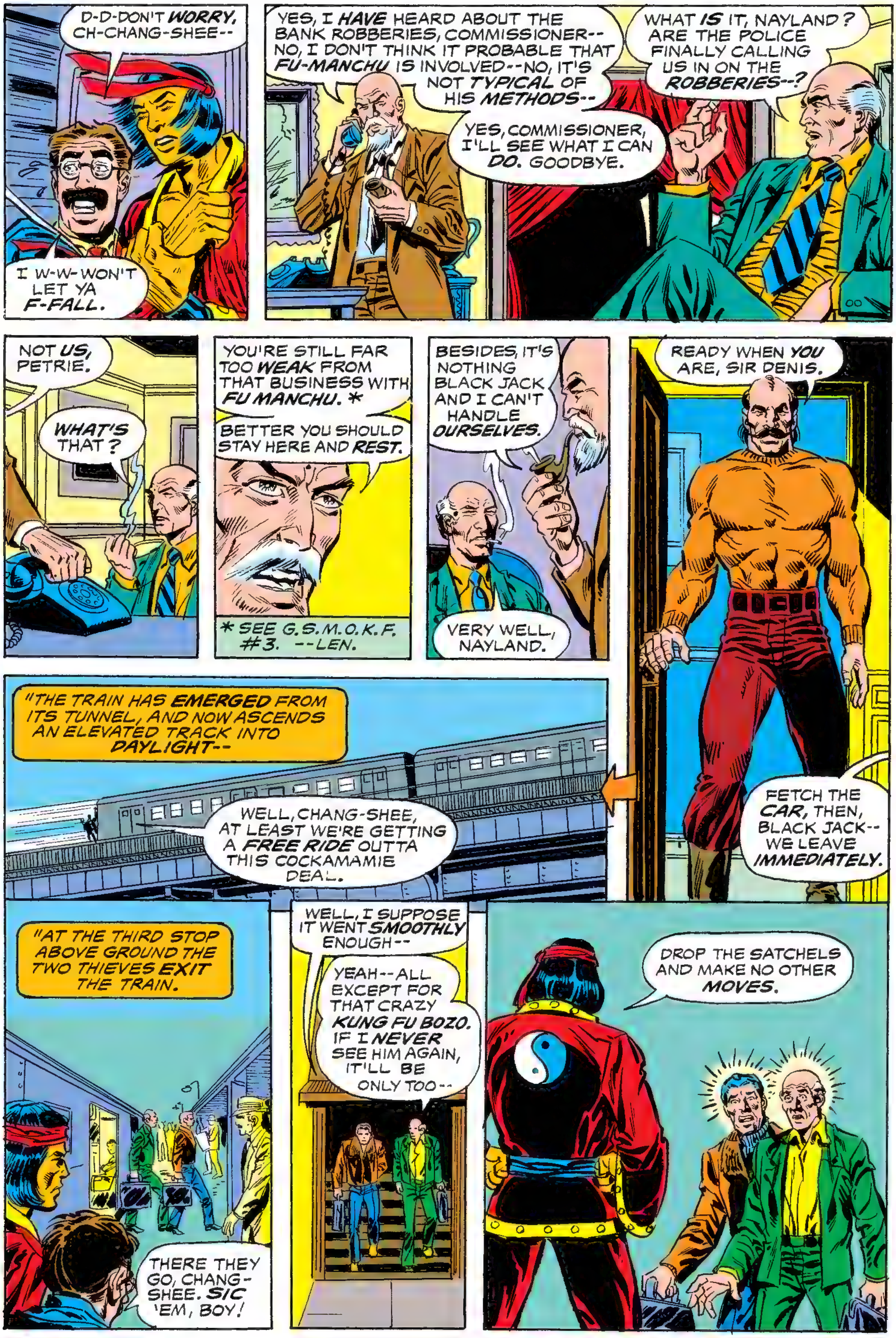

"A TRAP-DOOR CUT INTO THE FLOOR OF THE TRUCK-- AND POSITIONED OVER AN OPENED SEWER ENTRANCE--
WELL COME ON IN-- THE WATER'S SLIME!
ON TOP OF THAT, THE DESPERADOES' TRAIL IS FRESH--!
ACTUALLY, IT'S PRETTY RANCID, BUT THEY CAN'T HAVE GONE FAR.
BESIDES, THAT'S NO MOUSE-HOLE THAT'S COME BETWEEN US-- SO NOW'S YOUR CHANCE TO PROVE WHETHER YOU'RE A MAN OR A LOUSE!
"THERE IS NO DOUBT THE THIEVES HAVE FLED THROUGH THE CONDUITS BELOW. BUT SHOULD I ACCOMPANY THIS--STRANGE --MAN--?
"SINCE I HAVE ALREADY COME THIS FAR--
AHAA! I KNEW YOU'D CHOOSE THE MAN-HOLE.
SEWER I DID.
HOW ARE YOU CERTAIN THE BANK ROBBERS FLED IN THIS DIRECTION?
I'M NOT-- BUT THERE'S ONLY TWO WAYS THEY COULD'VE GONE, AND THAT, SIR, MAKES THE ODDS 50-50.
KREE-PEE
WHY, I REMEMBER I ONCE BET ON A NAG THAT WAS A TEN-TO-ONE LONGSHOT--

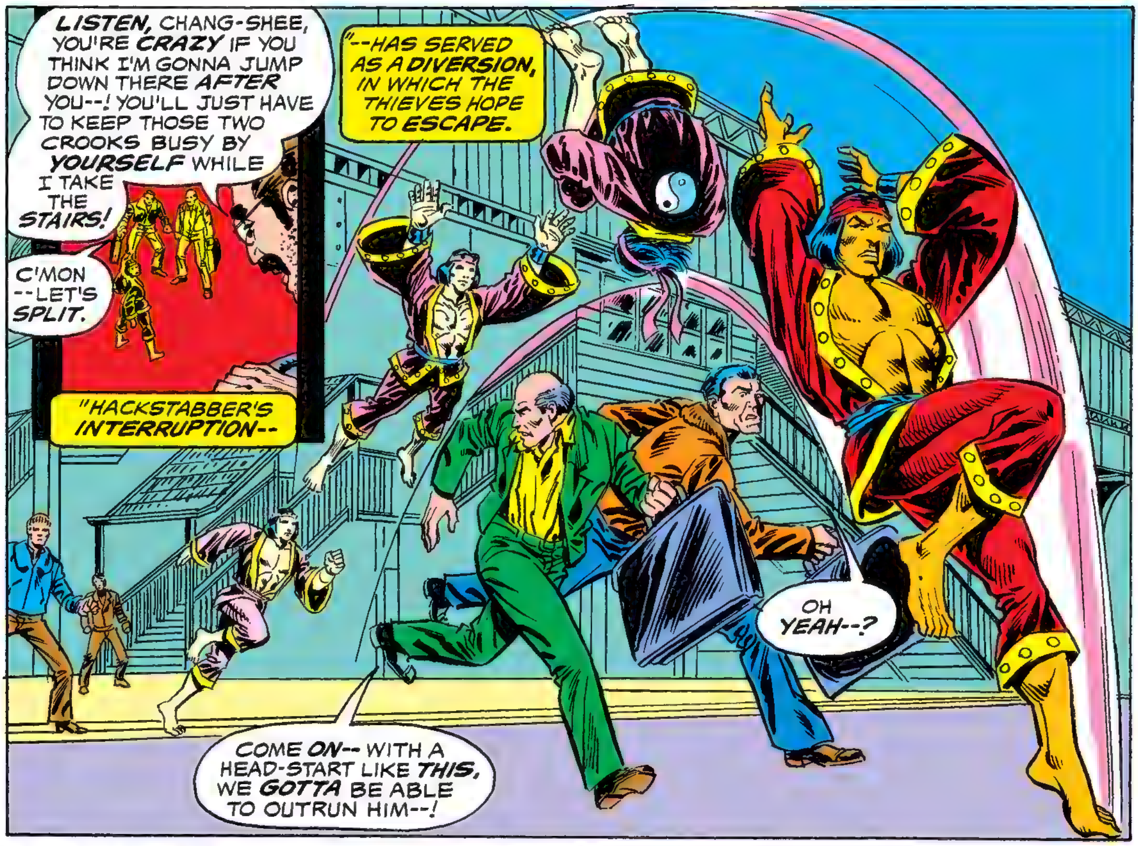

AND YOU WON A GREAT SUM OF MONEY FROM THIS WAGER--
NOPE. THE CRUMMY HORSE CAME IN TENTH AND I LOST EVERYTHING I HAD. DO YOU THINK I'D BE SLOSHIN' AROUND DOWN HERE IN THE SEWER IF THE NAG HAD WON--?
BUT JUST THINK WHERE I'D BE IF HE HAD WON--
--AND BY THE WAY, THE MONIKER'S RUFUS T. HACKSTABBER. WHAT'S YOURS?
PLISH
SHANG-CHI.
CHANG-CHEE, EH? WELL, A ROSE IS A ROSE--OR AT LEAST ARISEN--AND MIGHTY ARE THE POLLEN.
THE WHAT?
THE FALLEN.
WHAT'D YOU THINK I SAID?
NOTHING.
WELL, YOU'RE ABSOLUTELY RIGHT, CHANG-SHEE, BUT DON'T LET IT GET AROUND.
THE VERY WALLS HAVE EARS--AND THEY MIGHT STOP LISTENING IF THEY FOUND OUT I WAS SAYING NOTHING AND THEN WHERE WOULD I BE, I ASK YOU--?
PROBABLY OUT IN SOME GLUE-FACTORY WITH THAT LOUSY HORSE WHO BUCKED ME RIGHT OUT OF THE SADDLE OF RICHES AND INTO A TAXI-CAB!
AHH, WHAT A LIFE!
I REQUEST THE HONOR OF YOUR AUDIENCE, O CELESTIAL FU MANCHU.
SPEAK.
MY REPORT CONCERNS TIGER-CLAW, THE SHADOW-THIEF AND MASTER ASSASSIN OF WHOM YOU HAVE INQUIRED.

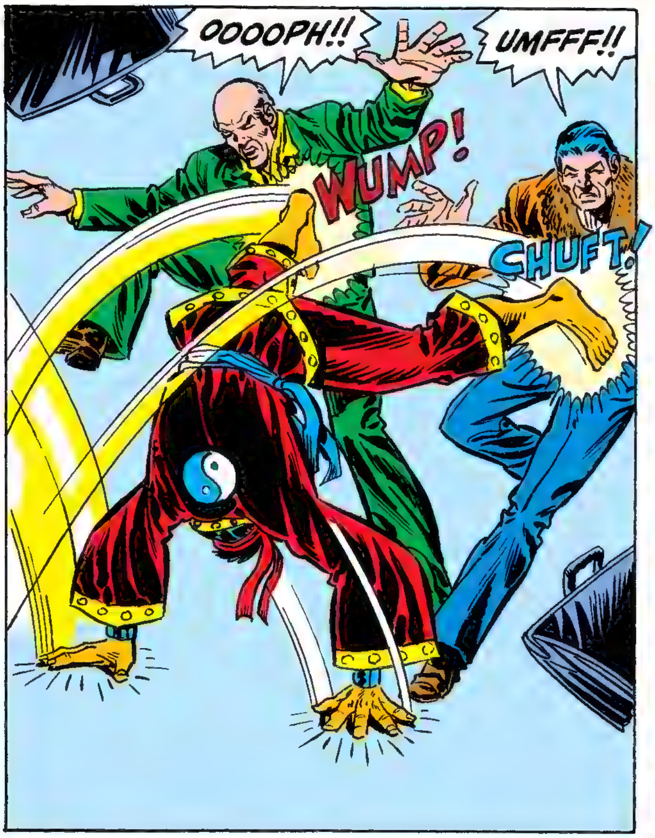

THEN YOU HAVE *LOCATED* HIM?
SADLY, *NO*-- O CELESTIAL ONE.
I HAVE RECEIVED **COMMUNIQUES** FROM EVERY POINT OF THE **GLOBE,** FROM EVERY **SI-FAN LODGE MASTER** WHO REMAINS **LOYAL** TO YOUR **WILL**--AND **NONE** HAVE KNOWLEDGE OF **TIGER-CLAW.**
THEN PERHAPS HE *TOO* HAS DEFECTED TO MY *DAUGHTER'S* GROWING ARMY OF SI-FAN--
--AND NOW STANDS WITH FAH LO SUEE **AGAINST** ME*--AS DOES MY **SON,** SHANG-CHI--
*SEE ISSUES 27 & 28 OF M.O.K.F. **MONTHLY** MAG. --LEN.
GO NOW--WITH A FORCE OF SI-FAN **WARRIORS**--
--AND **FIND** THIS ONE NAMED **TIGER-CLAW.**
YES, GLORIOUS FU MANCHU.
MY **LORD,** IF THIS UNWORTHLY ONE MAY **ASK**--
--WHAT **DESTINY** HAVE YOU **APPOINTED** FOR **TIGER-CLAW**--?
TIGER-CLAW IS A **QUISLING,** DUCHARME--A **TRAITOR** TO MY JUST AND NOBLE **CAUSE.**
TRAITORS **DIE,** DUCHARME.
IN SLOW **PAIN.**

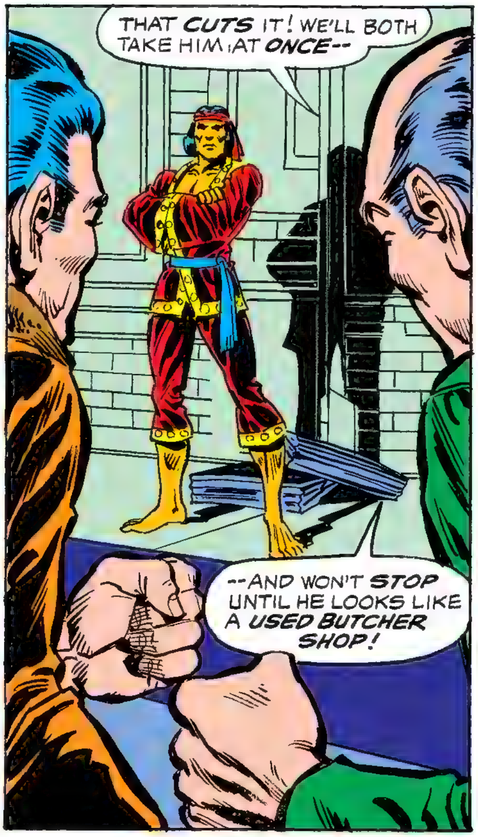

"THE SOFT ECHO OF HARD SHOES ON HARDER STONE ALERTS ME TO THEIR PRESENCE EVEN BEFORE WE PASS THROUGH THE CONDUIT--
GADZOOKS, IT'S THEM!
SO THAT'S WHY YA TOLD ME TO SHUT MY FLAP. AREN'T YOU THE SLY ONE?
WELL, I GOT NEWS FOR YA, CHANG-SHEE--
--THEY WENT THATA-AWAY.
COME ON. I CAN FEEL THAT $7.80 BURNING A HOLE IN MY POCKET ALREADY--
--AND YOU WOULDN'T WANT ME TO SPEND IT BEFORE WE CATCH THE MALAPROPRIATING MISCREANTS, NOW WOULD YOU? THAT'D BE LIKE CRACKING OUR EGGSHELLS BEFORE THE CHICKENS SCRATCH!
"A SOUND--ROARING--RUSHING--
"--I MUST LEARN ITS ORIGIN.
MY, AREN'T YOU THE EAGER BEAVER? OR AT LEAST THE WILLING MONKEY...
THE LADDER'S NOT GOOD ENOUGH FOR YOU, EH? THE WAY YOU'RE FLYING AFTER THESE CROOKS, YOU'D THINK YOU WERE THE ONE WHO LOST $7.80.
WHICH REMINDS ME, IF WE DON'T--
HURRY.
HURRY?
THAT'S JUST WHAT I WAS ABOUT TO SAY-- BUT IF YOU ASK ME, THERE'S NO REAL NEED TO--
--YIKES!!
WHY DIDN'T YA SAY SO--?!?
THIS'S GOTTA BE THE MOST DANGEROUS HOLE I EVER CRAWLED OUT OF--!

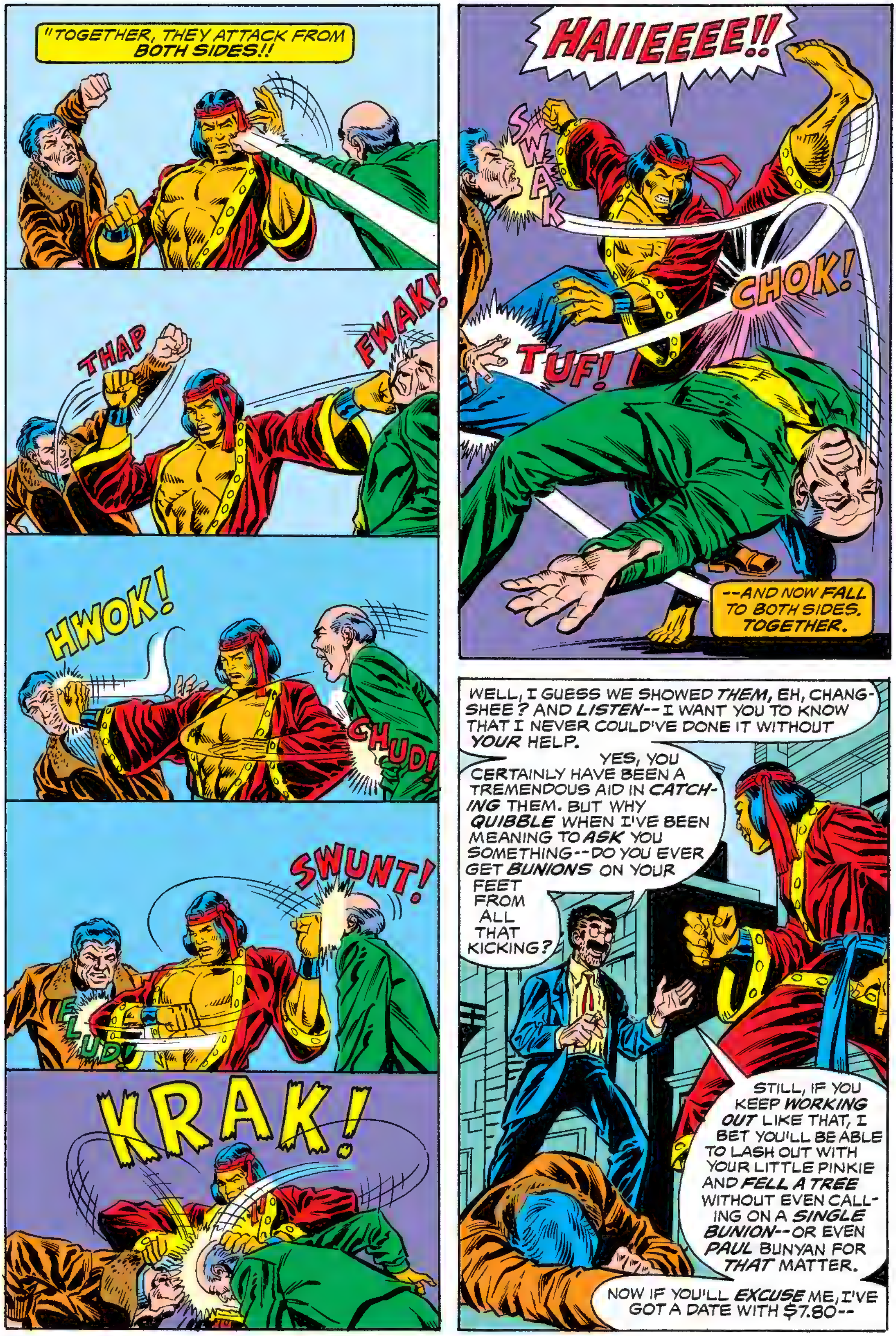

HURRY, CHANG-SHEE, DO SOMETHING BEFORE I--
--YIIIIII!!
"THE TRAIN SLOWS NOW--
"--BEFORE COMING TO A FULL STOP. THE TWO BANK ROBBERS HAVE NOT SEEN US--AND NOW BOARD THE TRAIN.
I STILL SAY IT'S CRIMINAL TO PUT A MAN-HOLE IN A PLACE LIKE THAT.
DON'T THEY KNOW A MAN COULD LOSE HIS HEAD IN SUCH A SITUATION--?
THE TRAIN IS LEAVING.
"IF I AM TO FOLLOW THE THIEVES--
"--I MUST LEAVE WITH IT.
HANG ON, CHANG-SHEE--WAIT FOR ME!!
THAT'S MY $7.80 RIDING THOSE RAILS--!
JUST HOPE MY TRUSS--
HOLDS UP UNDER THIS--
--JUMP!
DID YOU SEE THAT?!
I'M--NOT SURE--

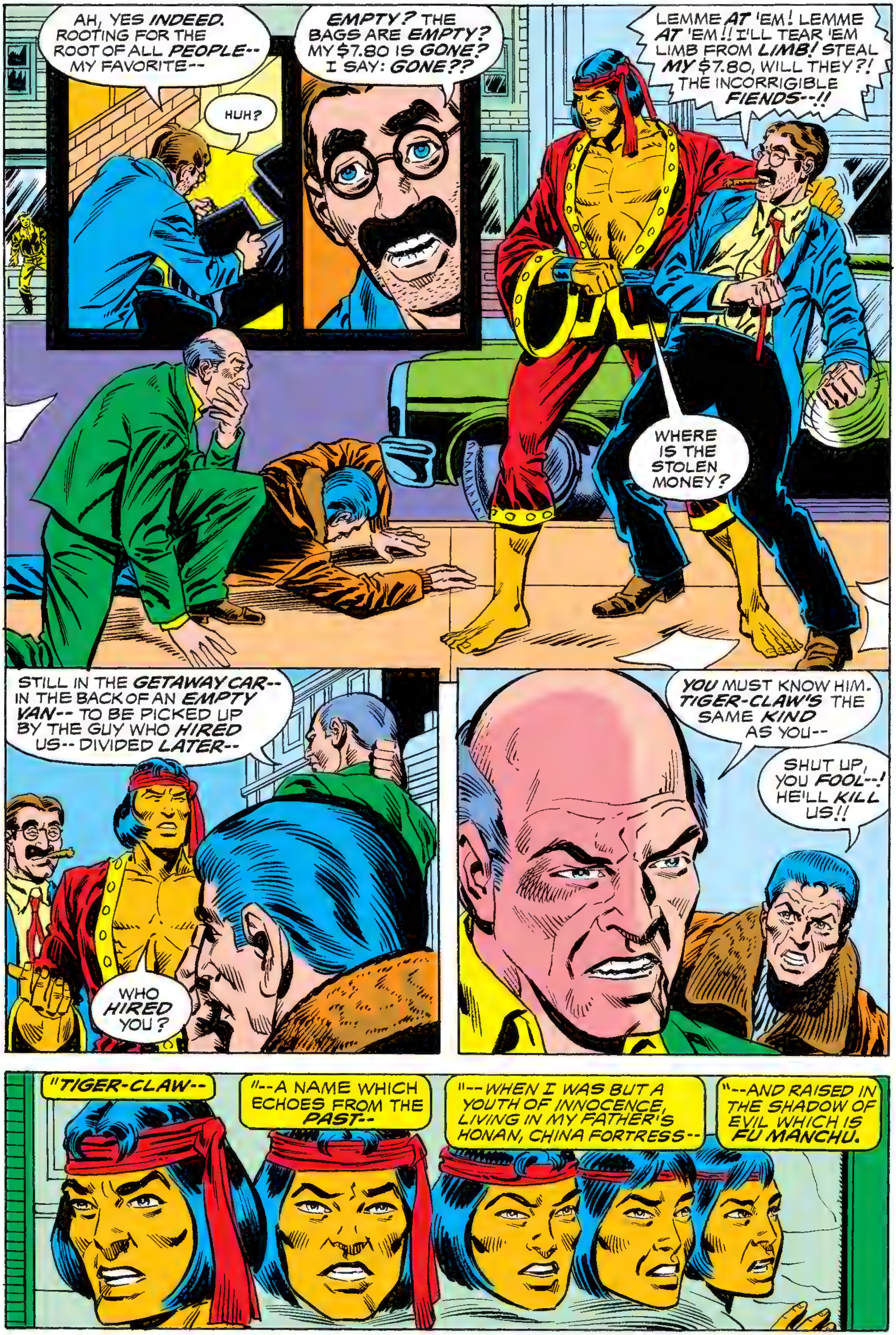

D-D-DON'T WORRY, CH-CHANG-SHEE--
I W-W-WON'T LET YA F-FALL.
YES, I HAVE HEARD ABOUT THE BANK ROBBERIES, COMMISSIONER--NO, I DON'T THINK IT PROBABLE THAT FU-MANCHU IS INVOLVED--NO, IT'S NOT TYPICAL OF HIS METHODS--
YES, COMMISSIONER, I'LL SEE WHAT I CAN DO. GOODBYE.
WHAT IS IT, NAYLAND? ARE THE POLICE FINALLY CALLING US IN ON THE ROBBERIES--?
NOT US, PETRIE.
WHAT'S THAT?
YOU'RE STILL FAR TOO WEAK FROM THAT BUSINESS WITH FU MANCHU. *
BETTER YOU SHOULD STAY HERE AND REST.
* SEE G.S.M.O.K.F. #3. --LEN.
BESIDES, IT'S NOTHING BLACK JACK AND I CAN'T HANDLE OURSELVES.
VERY WELL, NAYLAND.
READY WHEN YOU ARE, SIR DENIS.
FETCH THE CAR, THEN, BLACK JACK--WE LEAVE IMMEDIATELY.
"THE TRAIN HAS EMERGED FROM ITS TUNNEL, AND NOW ASCENDS AN ELEVATED TRACK INTO DAYLIGHT--
WELL, CHANG-SHEE, AT LEAST WE'RE GETTING A FREE RIDE OUTTA THIS COCKAMAMIE DEAL.
"AT THE THIRD STOP ABOVE GROUND THE TWO THIEVES EXIT THE TRAIN.
THERE THEY GO, CHANG-SHEE. SIC 'EM, BOY!
WELL, I SUPPOSE IT WENT SMOOTHLY ENOUGH--
YEAH--ALL EXCEPT FOR THAT CRAZY KUNG FU BOZO. IF I NEVER SEE HIM AGAIN, IT'LL BE ONLY TOO--
DROP THE SATCHELS AND MAKE NO OTHER MOVES.

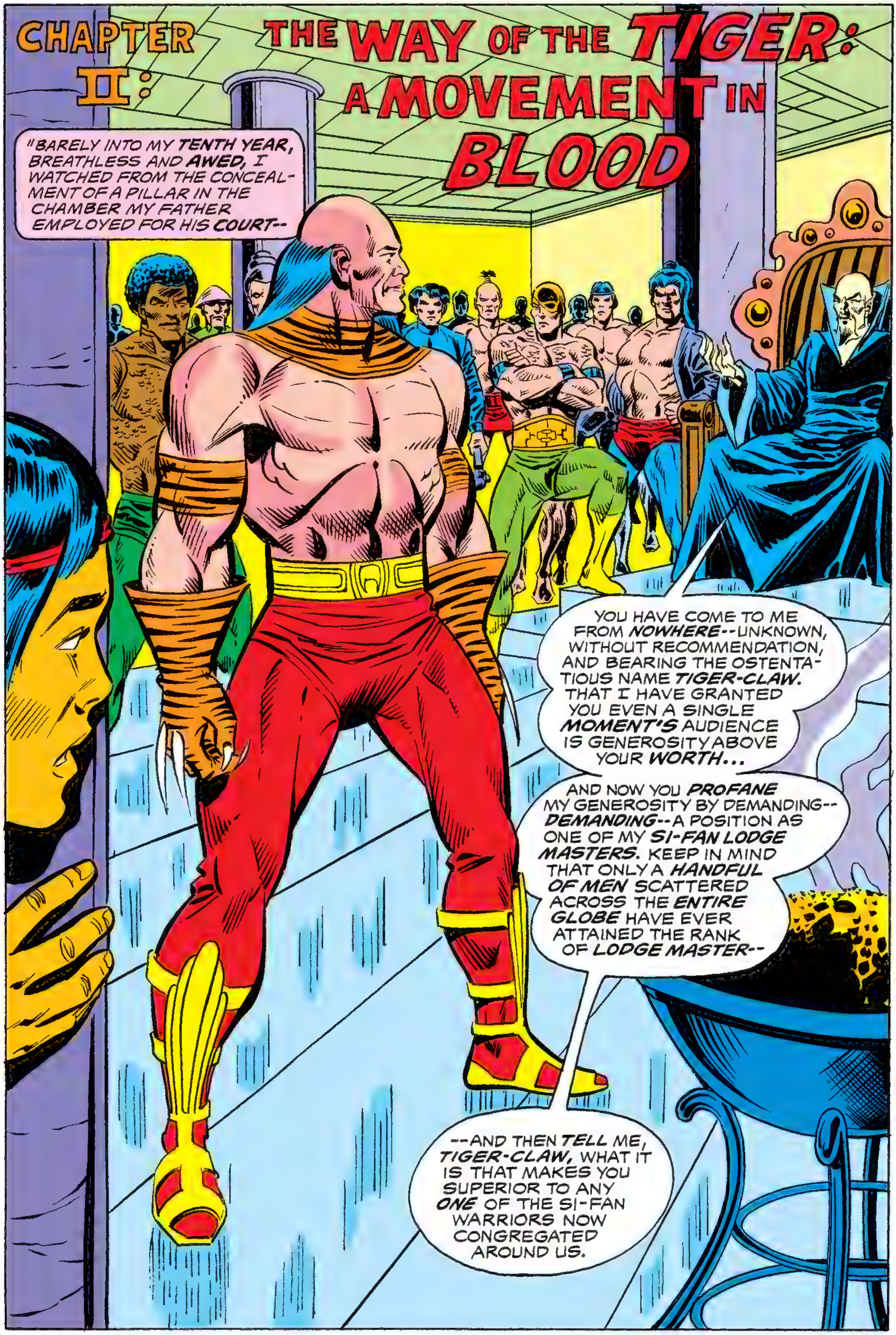

LISTEN, CHANG-SHEE, YOU'RE CRAZY IF YOU THINK I'M GONNA JUMP DOWN THERE AFTER YOU--! YOU'LL JUST HAVE TO KEEP THOSE TWO CROOKS BUSY BY YOURSELF WHILE I TAKE THE STAIRS!
C'MON --LET'S SPLIT.
"HACKSTABBER'S INTERRUPTION--
"--HAS SERVED AS A DIVERSION, IN WHICH THE THIEVES HOPE TO ESCAPE.
OH YEAH--?
COME ON-- WITH A HEAD-START LIKE THIS, WE GOTTA BE ABLE TO OUTRUN HIM--!

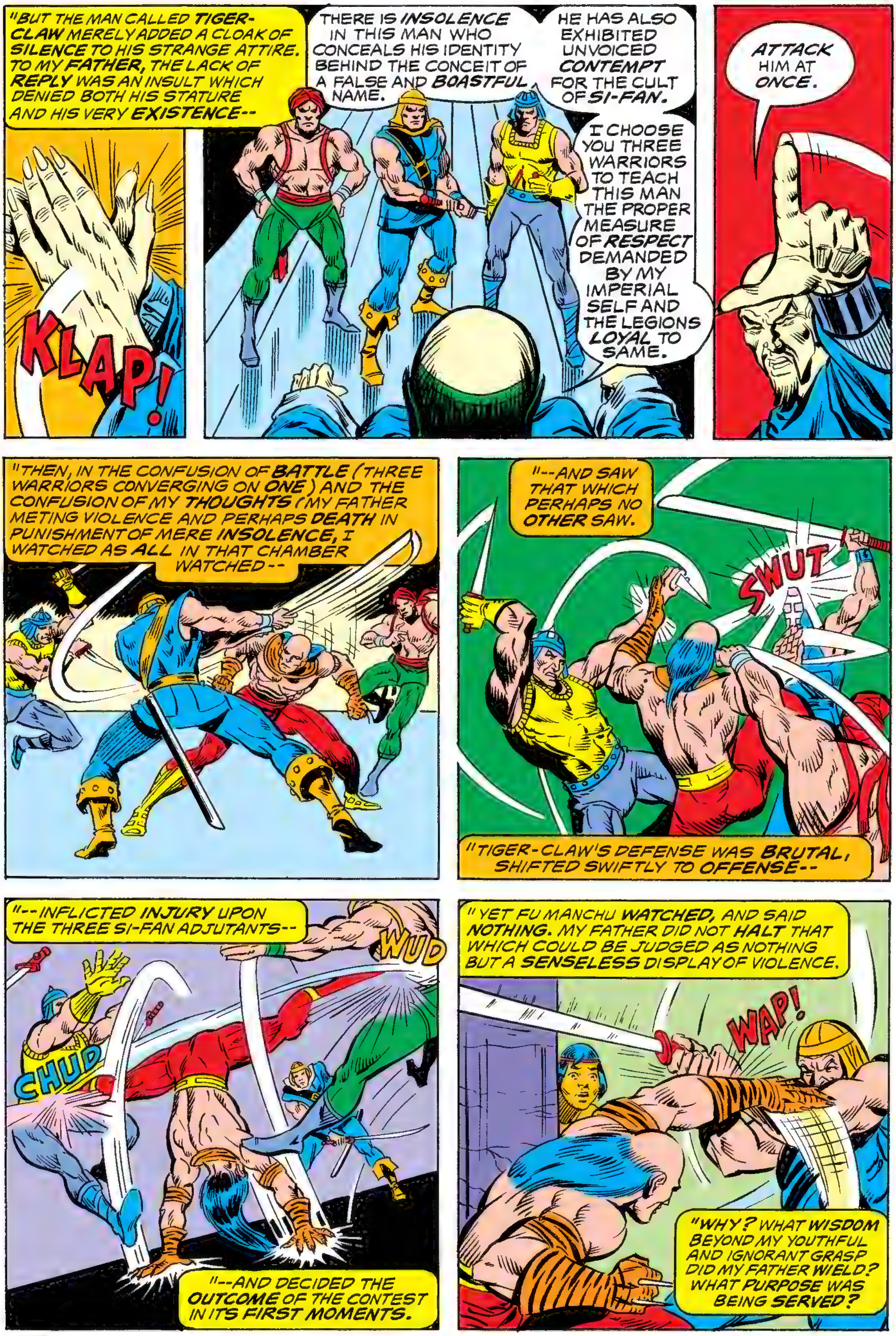

OOOOPH!!
UMFFF!!
WUMP!
CHUFT!

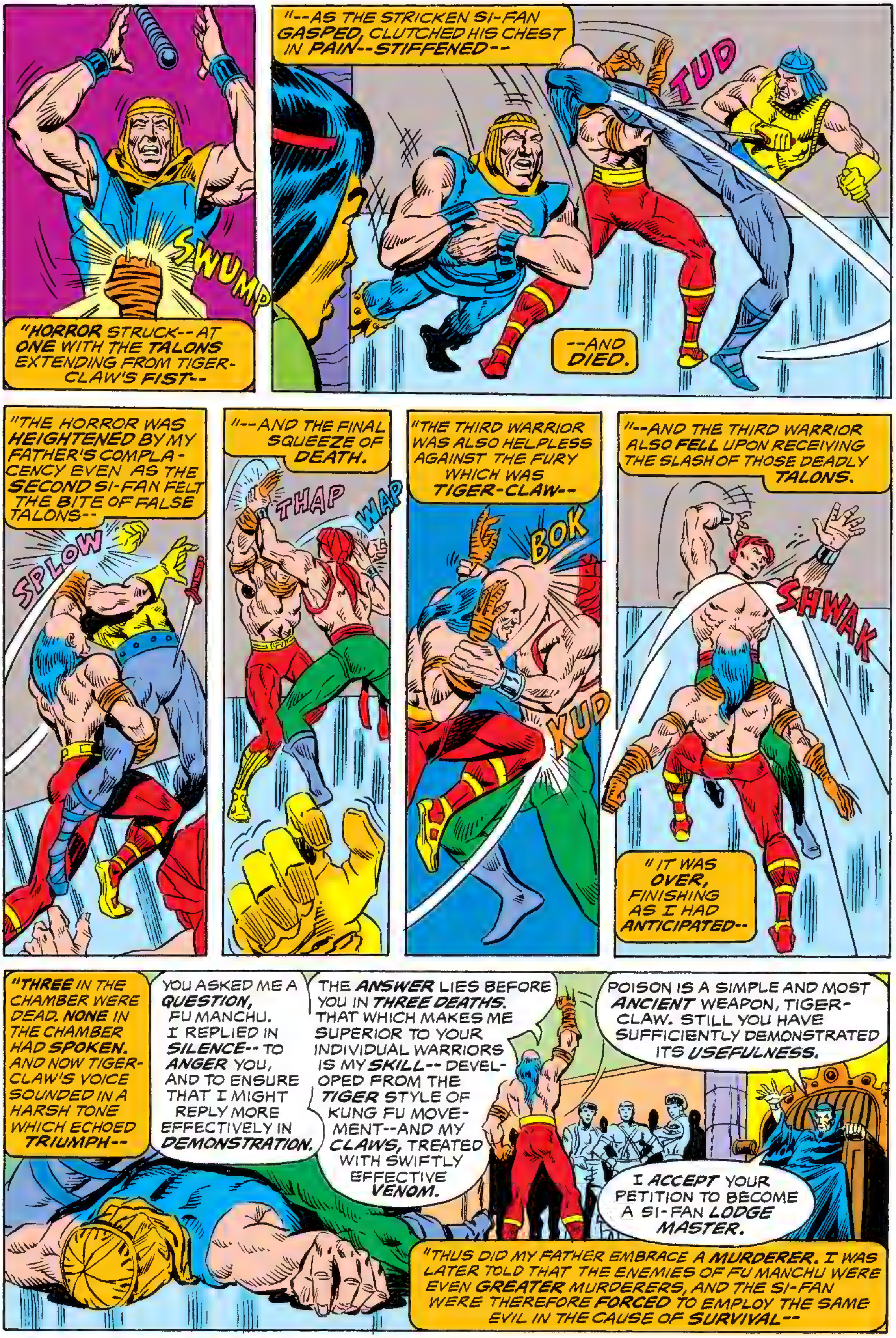

THAT CUTS IT! WE'LL BOTH TAKE HIM AT ONCE--
--AND WON'T STOP UNTIL HE LOOKS LIKE A USED BUTCHER SHOP!

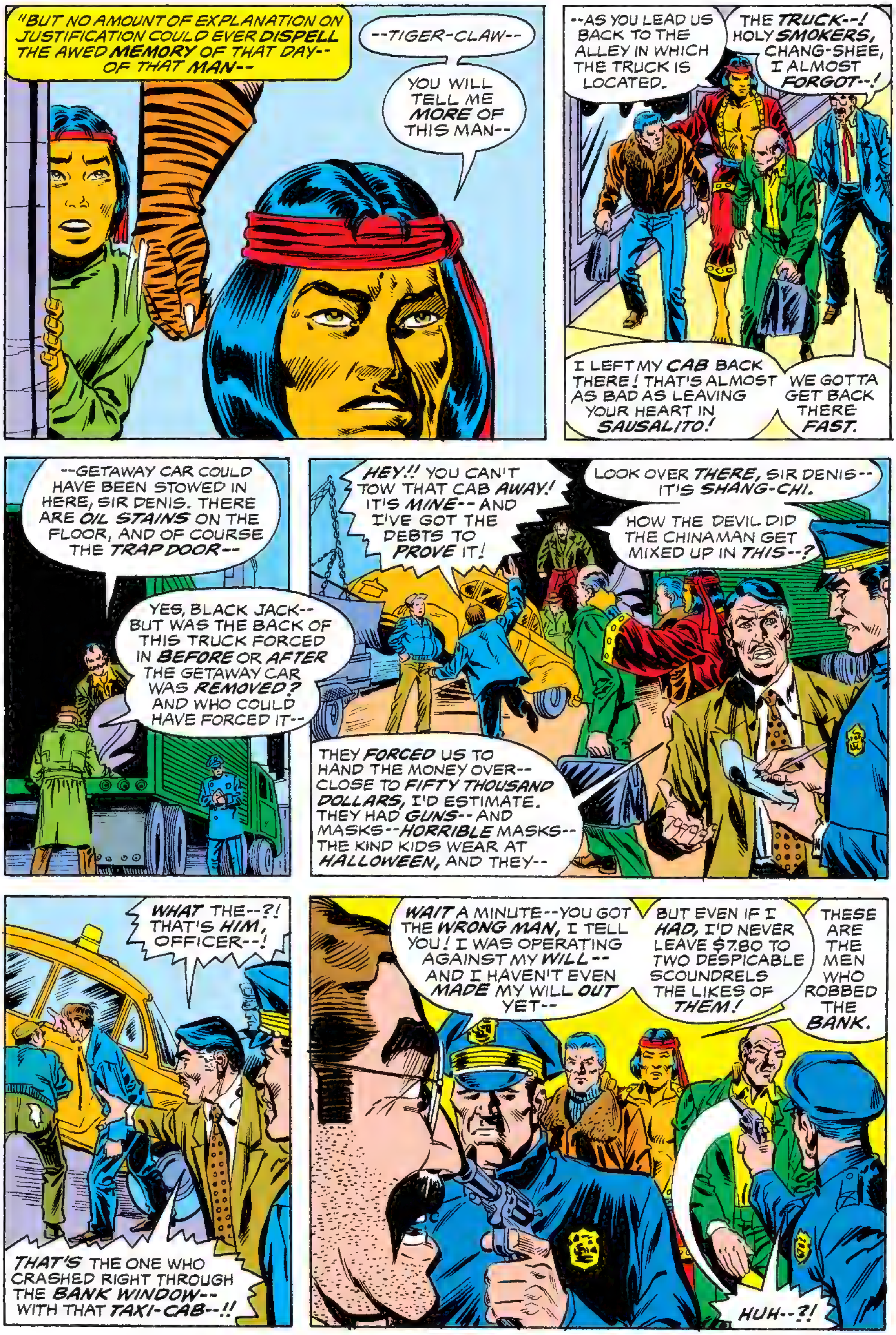

"TOGETHER, THEY ATTACK FROM BOTH SIDES!!
THAP
FWAK!
HWOK!
CHUD!
SWUNT!
FLUD!
KRAK!
HAIIEEEE!!
SWAK
CHOK!
TUF!
--AND NOW FALL TO BOTH SIDES. TOGETHER.
WELL, I GUESS WE SHOWED THEM, EH, CHANG-SHEE? AND LISTEN-- I WANT YOU TO KNOW THAT I NEVER COULD'VE DONE IT WITHOUT YOUR HELP.
YES, YOU CERTAINLY HAVE BEEN A TREMENDOUS AID IN CATCHING THEM. BUT WHY QUIBBLE WHEN I'VE BEEN MEANING TO ASK YOU SOMETHING--DO YOU EVER GET BUNIONS ON YOUR FEET FROM ALL THAT KICKING?
STILL, IF YOU KEEP WORKING OUT LIKE THAT, I BET YOU'LL BE ABLE TO LASH OUT WITH YOUR LITTLE PINKIE AND FELL A TREE WITHOUT EVEN CALLING ON A SINGLE BUNION--OR EVEN PAUL BUNYAN FOR THAT MATTER.
NOW IF YOU'LL EXCUSE ME, I'VE GOT A DATE WITH $7.80--

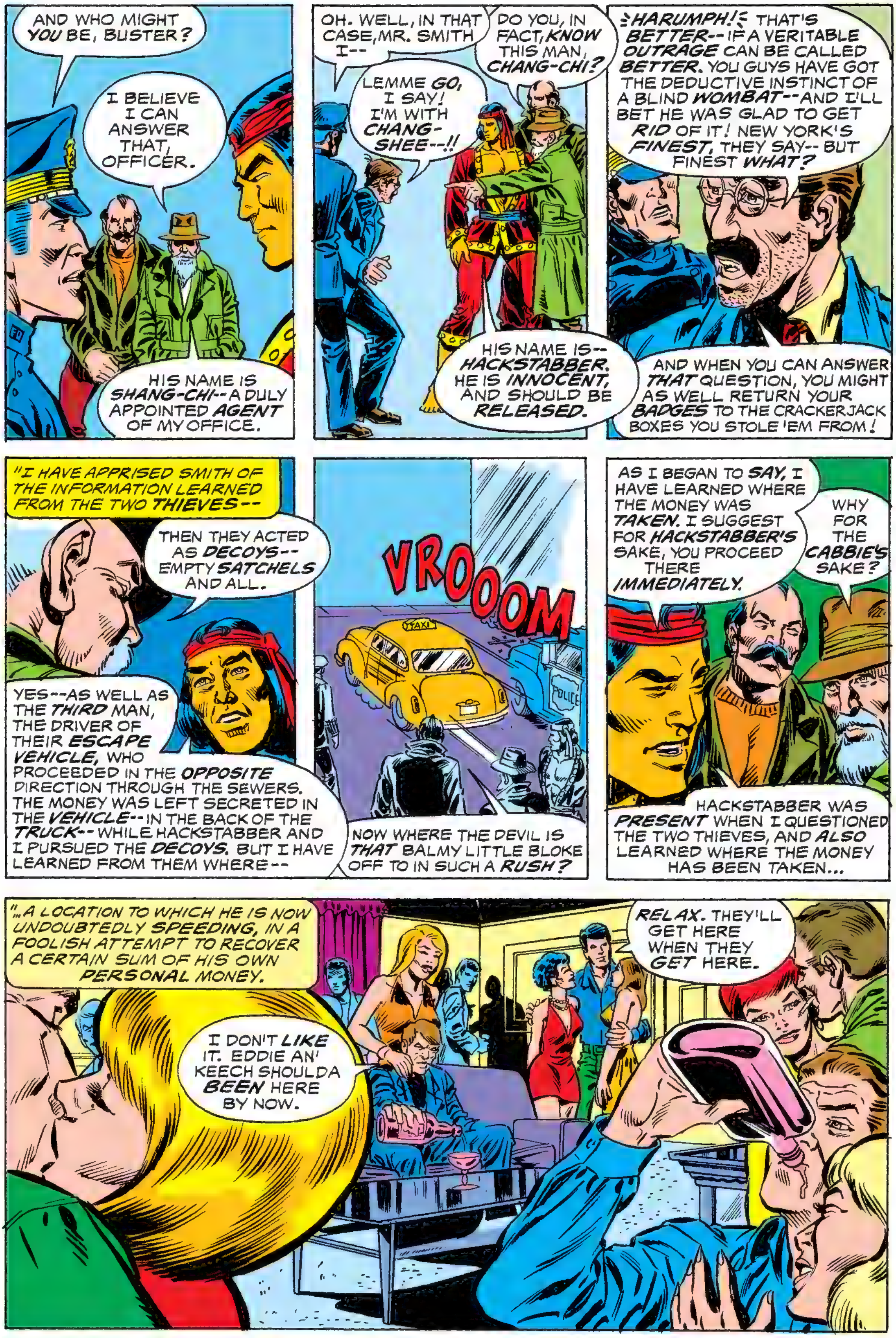

AH, YES INDEED. ROOTING FOR THE ROOT OF ALL PEOPLE-- MY FAVORITE--
HUH?
EMPTY? THE BAGS ARE EMPTY? MY $7.80 IS GONE? I SAY: GONE??
LEMME AT 'EM! LEMME AT 'EM!! I'LL TEAR 'EM LIMB FROM LIMB! STEAL MY $7.80, WILL THEY?! THE INCORRIGIBLE FIENDS--!!
WHERE IS THE STOLEN MONEY?
STILL IN THE GETAWAY CAR-- IN THE BACK OF AN EMPTY VAN-- TO BE PICKED UP BY THE GUY WHO HIRED US-- DIVIDED LATER--
WHO HIRED YOU?
YOU MUST KNOW HIM. TIGER-CLAW'S THE SAME KIND AS YOU--
SHUT UP, YOU FOOL--! HE'LL KILL US!!
"TIGER-CLAW--
"--A NAME WHICH ECHOES FROM THE PAST--
"--WHEN I WAS BUT A YOUTH OF INNOCENCE, LIVING IN MY FATHER'S HONAN, CHINA FORTRESS--
"--AND RAISED IN THE SHADOW OF EVIL WHICH IS FU MANCHU.

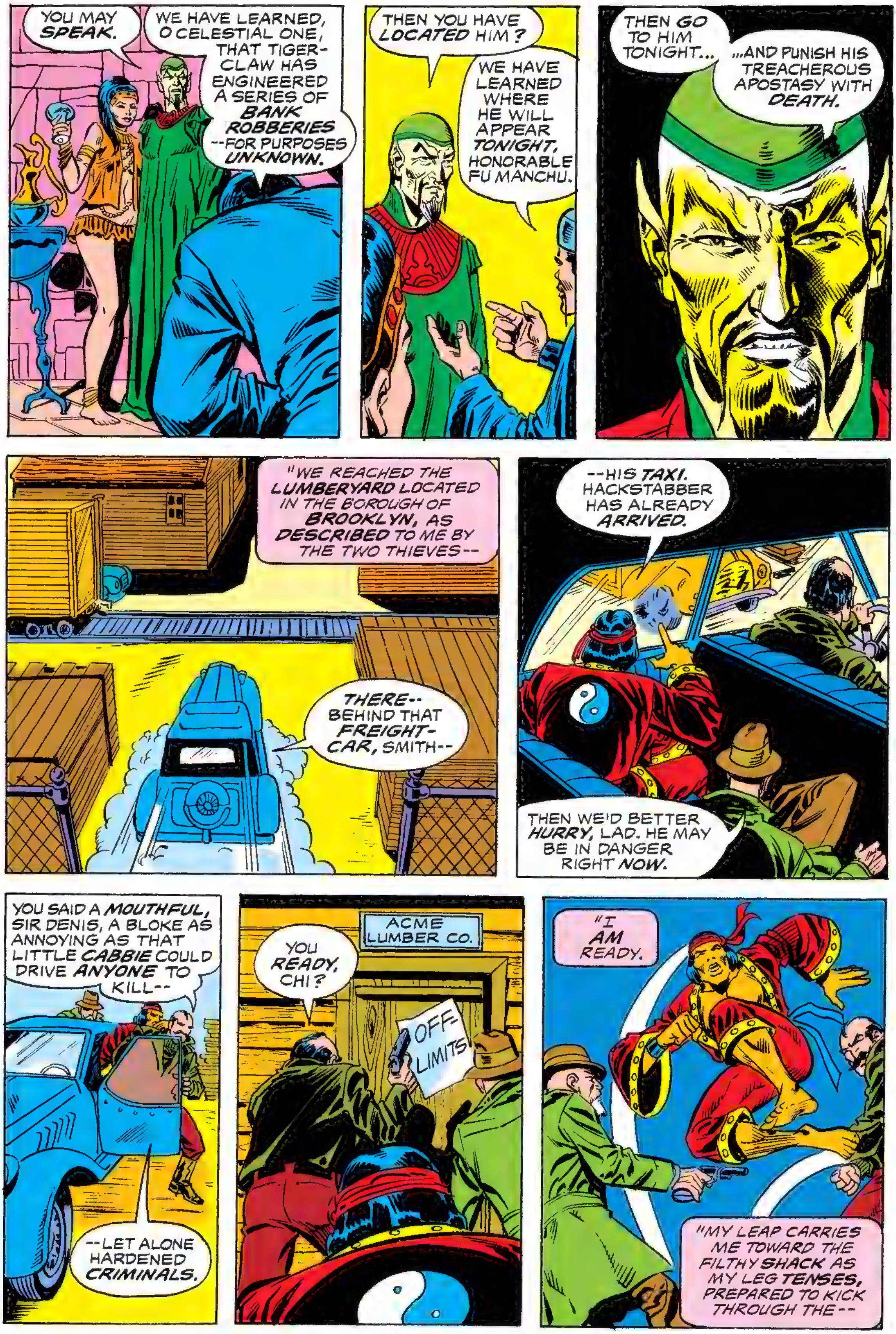

CHAPTER II: THE WAY OF THE TIGER: A MOVEMENT IN BLOOD
"BARELY INTO MY TENTH YEAR, BREATHLESS AND AWED, I WATCHED FROM THE CONCEALMENT OF A PILLAR IN THE CHAMBER MY FATHER EMPLOYED FOR HIS COURT--
YOU HAVE COME TO ME FROM NOWHERE--UNKNOWN, WITHOUT RECOMMENDATION, AND BEARING THE OSTENTATIOUS NAME TIGER-CLAW. THAT I HAVE GRANTED YOU EVEN A SINGLE MOMENT'S AUDIENCE IS GENEROSITY ABOVE YOUR WORTH...
AND NOW YOU PROFANE MY GENEROSITY BY DEMANDING--DEMANDING--A POSITION AS ONE OF MY SI-FAN LODGE MASTERS. KEEP IN MIND THAT ONLY A HANDFUL OF MEN SCATTERED ACROSS THE ENTIRE GLOBE HAVE EVER ATTAINED THE RANK OF LODGE MASTER--
--AND THEN TELL ME, TIGER-CLAW, WHAT IT IS THAT MAKES YOU SUPERIOR TO ANY ONE OF THE SI-FAN WARRIORS NOW CONGREGATED AROUND US.

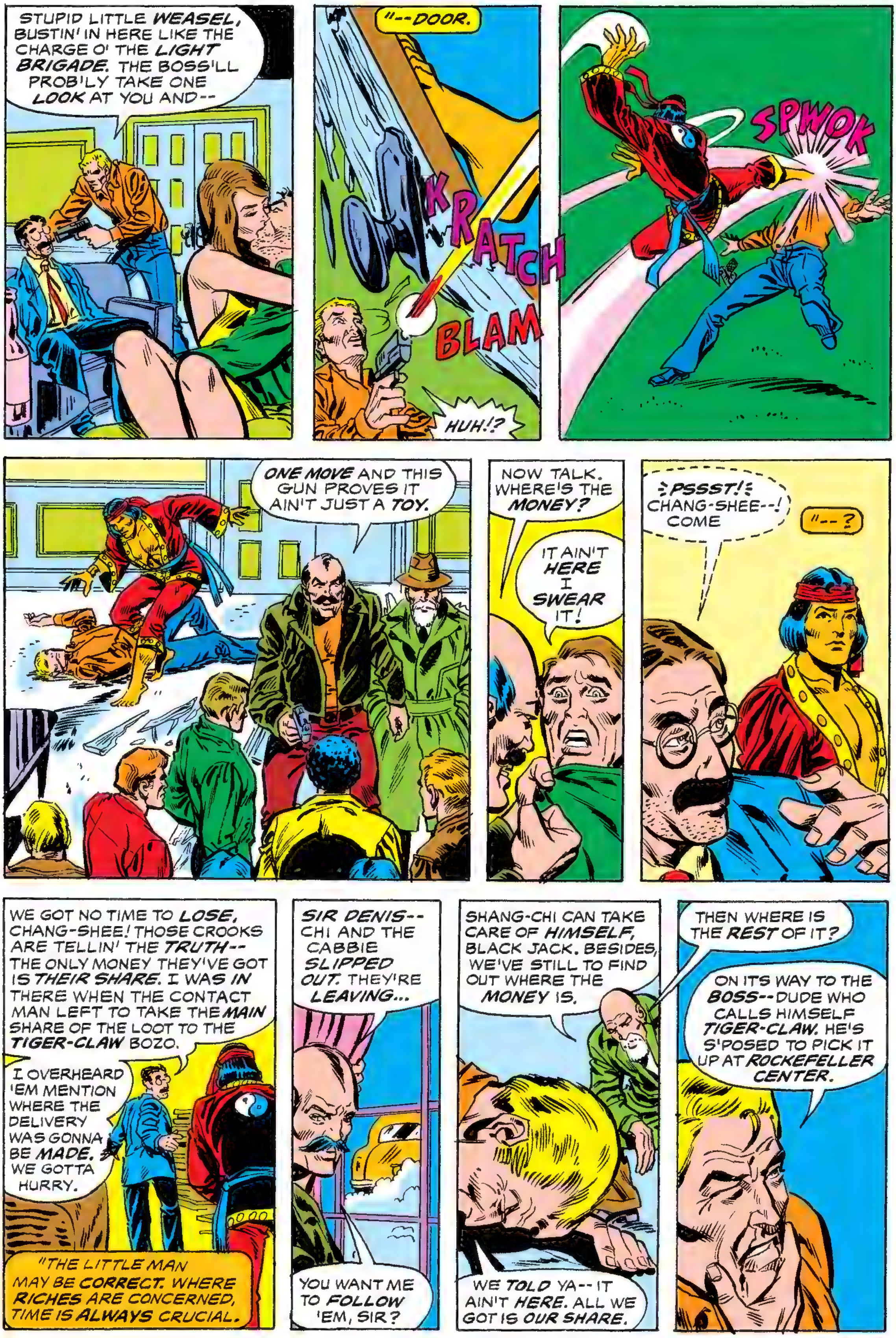

"BUT THE MAN CALLED TIGER-CLAW MERELY ADDED A CLOAK OF SILENCE TO HIS STRANGE ATTIRE. TO MY FATHER, THE LACK OF REPLY WAS AN INSULT WHICH DENIED BOTH HIS STATURE AND HIS VERY EXISTENCE--
KLAP!
THERE IS INSOLENCE IN THIS MAN WHO CONCEALS HIS IDENTITY BEHIND THE CONCEIT OF A FALSE AND BOASTFUL NAME.
HE HAS ALSO EXHIBITED UNVOICED CONTEMPT FOR THE CULT OF SI-FAN.
I CHOOSE YOU THREE WARRIORS TO TEACH THIS MAN THE PROPER MEASURE OF RESPECT DEMANDED BY MY IMPERIAL SELF AND THE LEGIONS LOYAL TO SAME.
ATTACK HIM AT ONCE.
"THEN, IN THE CONFUSION OF BATTLE (THREE WARRIORS CONVERGING ON ONE) AND THE CONFUSION OF MY THOUGHTS (MY FATHER METING VIOLENCE AND PERHAPS DEATH IN PUNISHMENT OF MERE INSOLENCE, I WATCHED AS ALL IN THAT CHAMBER WATCHED--
"--AND SAW THAT WHICH PERHAPS NO OTHER SAW.
SWUT
"TIGER-CLAW'S DEFENSE WAS BRUTAL, SHIFTED SWIFTLY TO OFFENSE--
"--INFLICTED INJURY UPON THE THREE SI-FAN ADJUTANTS--
WUD
CHUD
"--AND DECIDED THE OUTCOME OF THE CONTEST IN ITS FIRST MOMENTS.
"YET FU MANCHU WATCHED, AND SAID NOTHING. MY FATHER DID NOT HALT THAT WHICH COULD BE JUDGED AS NOTHING BUT A SENSELESS DISPLAY OF VIOLENCE.
WAP!
"WHY? WHAT WISDOM BEYOND MY YOUTHFUL AND IGNORANT GRASP DID MY FATHER WIELD? WHAT PURPOSE WAS BEING SERVED?

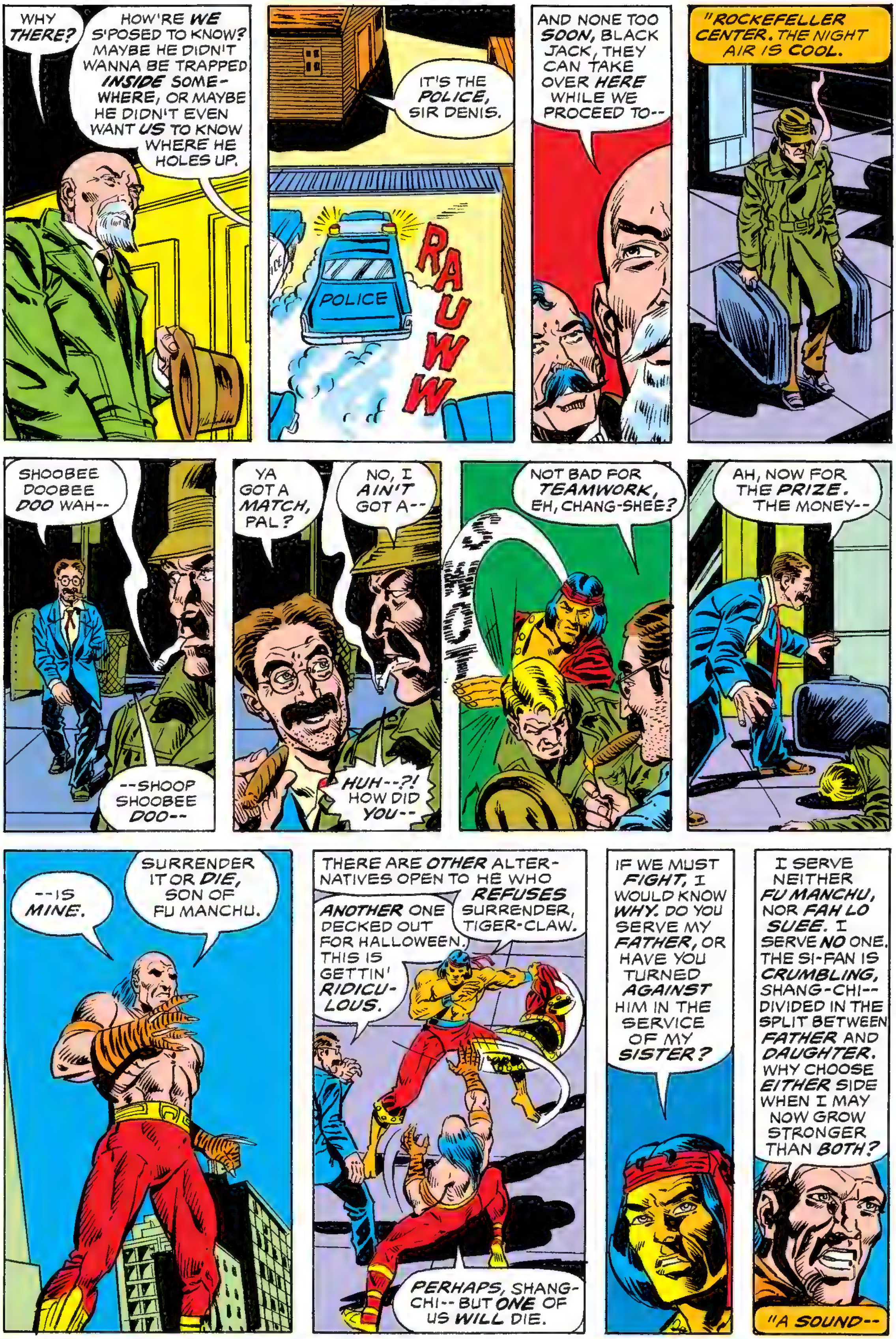

"HORROR STRUCK-- AT ONE WITH THE TALONS EXTENDING FROM TIGER-CLAW'S FIST--
SWUMP
"--AS THE STRICKEN SI-FAN GASPED, CLUTCHED HIS CHEST IN PAIN--STIFFENED--
TUD
--AND DIED.
"THE HORROR WAS HEIGHTENED BY MY FATHER'S COMPLACENCY EVEN AS THE SECOND SI-FAN FELT THE BITE OF FALSE TALONS--
SPLOW
"--AND THE FINAL SQUEEZE OF DEATH.
THAP
WAP
"THE THIRD WARRIOR WAS ALSO HELPLESS AGAINST THE FURY WHICH WAS TIGER-CLAW--
BOK
KUD
"--AND THE THIRD WARRIOR ALSO FELL UPON RECEIVING THE SLASH OF THOSE DEADLY TALONS.
SHWAK
"IT WAS OVER, FINISHING AS I HAD ANTICIPATED--
"THREE IN THE CHAMBER WERE DEAD. NONE IN THE CHAMBER HAD SPOKEN. AND NOW TIGER-CLAW'S VOICE SOUNDED IN A HARSH TONE WHICH ECHOED TRIUMPH--
YOU ASKED ME A QUESTION, FU MANCHU. I REPLIED IN SILENCE-- TO ANGER YOU, AND TO ENSURE THAT I MIGHT REPLY MORE EFFECTIVELY IN DEMONSTRATION.
THE ANSWER LIES BEFORE YOU IN THREE DEATHS. THAT WHICH MAKES ME SUPERIOR TO YOUR INDIVIDUAL WARRIORS IS MY SKILL-- DEVELOPED FROM THE TIGER STYLE OF KUNG FU MOVEMENT--AND MY CLAWS, TREATED WITH SWIFTLY EFFECTIVE VENOM.
POISON IS A SIMPLE AND MOST ANCIENT WEAPON, TIGER-CLAW. STILL YOU HAVE SUFFICIENTLY DEMONSTRATED ITS USEFULNESS.
I ACCEPT YOUR PETITION TO BECOME A SI-FAN LODGE MASTER.
"THUS DID MY FATHER EMBRACE A MURDERER. I WAS LATER TOLD THAT THE ENEMIES OF FU MANCHU WERE EVEN GREATER MURDERERS, AND THE SI-FAN WERE THEREFORE FORCED TO EMPLOY THE SAME EVIL IN THE CAUSE OF SURVIVAL--

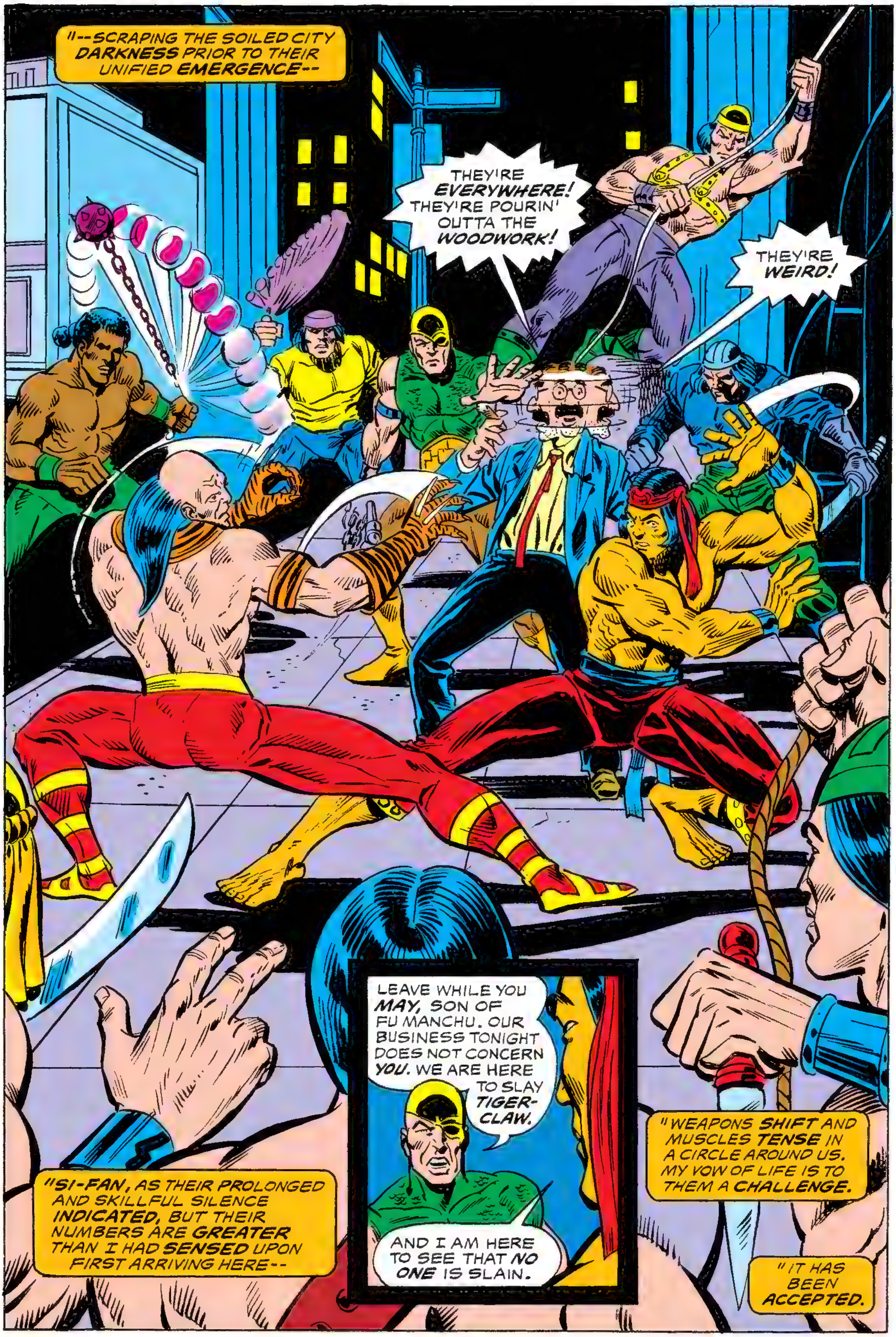

"BUT NO AMOUNT OF EXPLANATION ON JUSTIFICATION COULD EVER DISPELL THE AWED MEMORY OF THAT DAY-- OF THAT MAN--
--TIGER-CLAW--
YOU WILL TELL ME MORE OF THIS MAN--
--AS YOU LEAD US BACK TO THE ALLEY IN WHICH THE TRUCK IS LOCATED.
THE TRUCK--! HOLY SMOKERS, CHANG-SHEE, I ALMOST FORGOT--!
I LEFT MY CAB BACK THERE! THAT'S ALMOST AS BAD AS LEAVING YOUR HEART IN SAUSALITO!
WE GOTTA GET BACK THERE FAST.
--GETAWAY CAR COULD HAVE BEEN STOWED IN HERE, SIR DENIS. THERE ARE OIL STAINS ON THE FLOOR, AND OF COURSE THE TRAP DOOR--
YES, BLACK JACK-- BUT WAS THE BACK OF THIS TRUCK FORCED IN BEFORE OR AFTER THE GETAWAY CAR WAS REMOVED? AND WHO COULD HAVE FORCED IT--
HEY!! YOU CAN'T TOW THAT CAB AWAY! IT'S MINE-- AND I'VE GOT THE DEBTS TO PROVE IT!
LOOK OVER THERE, SIR DENIS-- IT'S SHANG-CHI.
HOW THE DEVIL DID THE CHINAMAN GET MIXED UP IN THIS--?
THEY FORCED US TO HAND THE MONEY OVER-- CLOSE TO FIFTY THOUSAND DOLLARS, I'D ESTIMATE. THEY HAD GUNS-- AND MASKS--HORRIBLE MASKS-- THE KIND KIDS WEAR AT HALLOWEEN, AND THEY--
WHAT THE--?! THAT'S HIM, OFFICER--!
THAT'S THE ONE WHO CRASHED RIGHT THROUGH THE BANK WINDOW-- WITH THAT TAXI-CAB--!!
WAIT A MINUTE--YOU GOT THE WRONG MAN, I TELL YOU! I WAS OPERATING AGAINST MY WILL-- AND I HAVEN'T EVEN MADE MY WILL OUT YET--
BUT EVEN IF I HAD, I'D NEVER LEAVE $7.80 TO TWO DESPICABLE SCOUNDRELS THE LIKES OF THEM!
THESE ARE THE MEN WHO ROBBED THE BANK.
HUH--?!

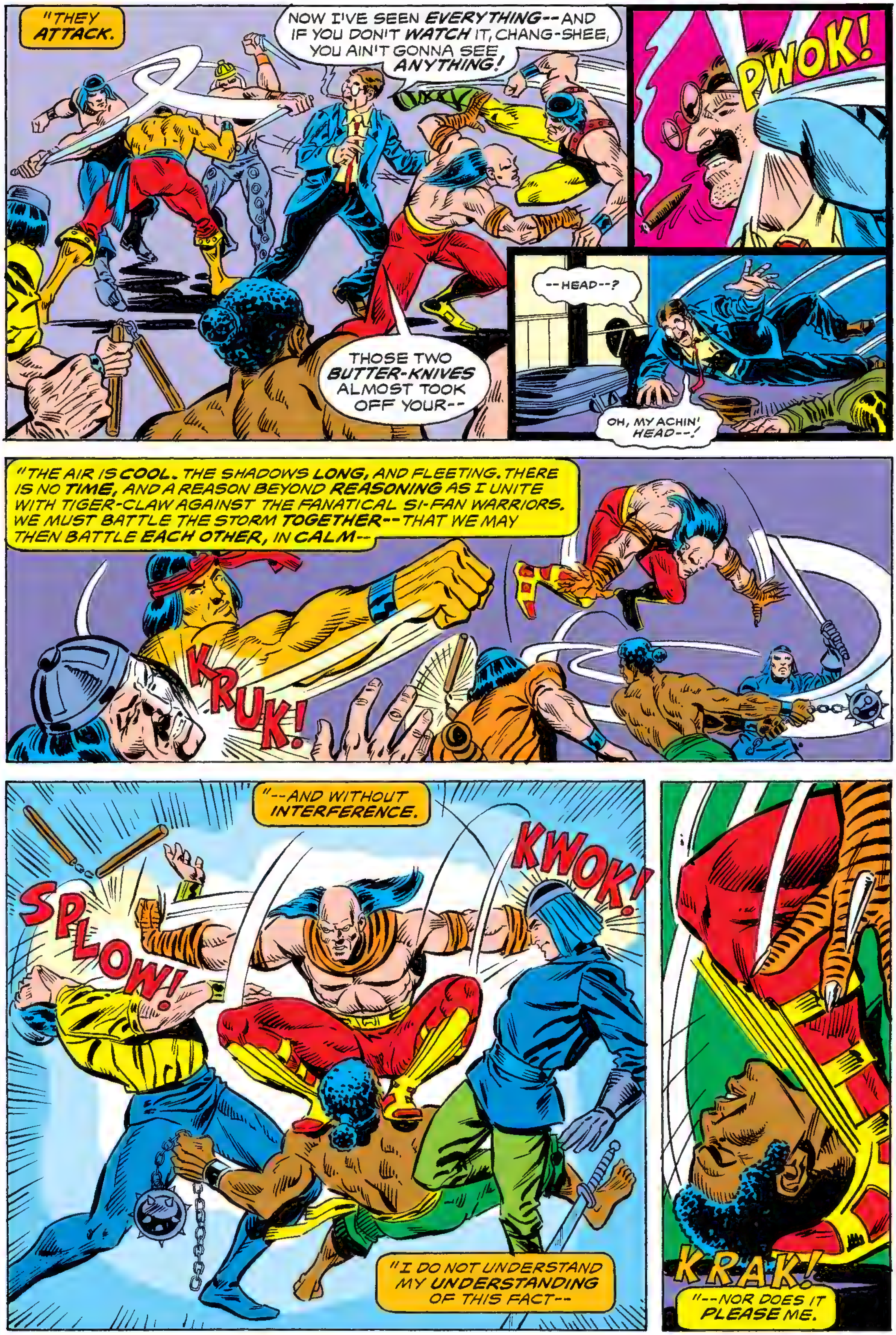

AND WHO MIGHT YOU BE, BUSTER?
I BELIEVE I CAN ANSWER THAT, OFFICER.
HIS NAME IS SHANG-CHI--A DULY APPOINTED AGENT OF MY OFFICE.
OH. WELL, IN THAT CASE, MR. SMITH I--
DO YOU, IN FACT, KNOW THIS MAN, CHANG-CHI?
LEMME GO, I SAY! I'M WITH CHANG-SHEE--!!
HIS NAME IS--HACKSTABBER. HE IS INNOCENT, AND SHOULD BE RELEASED.
HARUMPH! THAT'S BETTER--IF A VERITABLE OUTRAGE CAN BE CALLED BETTER. YOU GUYS HAVE GOT THE DEDUCTIVE INSTINCT OF A BLIND WOMBAT--AND I'LL BET HE WAS GLAD TO GET RID OF IT! NEW YORK'S FINEST, THEY SAY-- BUT FINEST WHAT?
AND WHEN YOU CAN ANSWER THAT QUESTION, YOU MIGHT AS WELL RETURN YOUR BADGES TO THE CRACKERJACK BOXES YOU STOLE 'EM FROM!
"I HAVE APPRISED SMITH OF THE INFORMATION LEARNED FROM THE TWO THIEVES--
THEN THEY ACTED AS DECOYS--EMPTY SATCHELS AND ALL.
YES--AS WELL AS THE THIRD MAN, THE DRIVER OF THEIR ESCAPE VEHICLE, WHO PROCEEDED IN THE OPPOSITE DIRECTION THROUGH THE SEWERS. THE MONEY WAS LEFT SECRETED IN THE VEHICLE--IN THE BACK OF THE TRUCK--WHILE HACKSTABBER AND I PURSUED THE DECOYS. BUT I HAVE LEARNED FROM THEM WHERE--
VROOOM
TAXI
POLICE
NOW WHERE THE DEVIL IS THAT BALMY LITTLE BLOKE OFF TO IN SUCH A RUSH?
AS I BEGAN TO SAY, I HAVE LEARNED WHERE THE MONEY WAS TAKEN. I SUGGEST FOR HACKSTABBER'S SAKE, YOU PROCEED THERE IMMEDIATELY.
WHY FOR THE CABBIE'S SAKE?
HACKSTABBER WAS PRESENT WHEN I QUESTIONED THE TWO THIEVES, AND ALSO LEARNED WHERE THE MONEY HAS BEEN TAKEN...
"...A LOCATION TO WHICH HE IS NOW UNDOUBTEDLY SPEEDING, IN A FOOLISH ATTEMPT TO RECOVER A CERTAIN SUM OF HIS OWN PERSONAL MONEY.
I DON'T LIKE IT. EDDIE AN' KEECH SHOULDA BEEN HERE BY NOW.
RELAX. THEY'LL GET HERE WHEN THEY GET HERE.

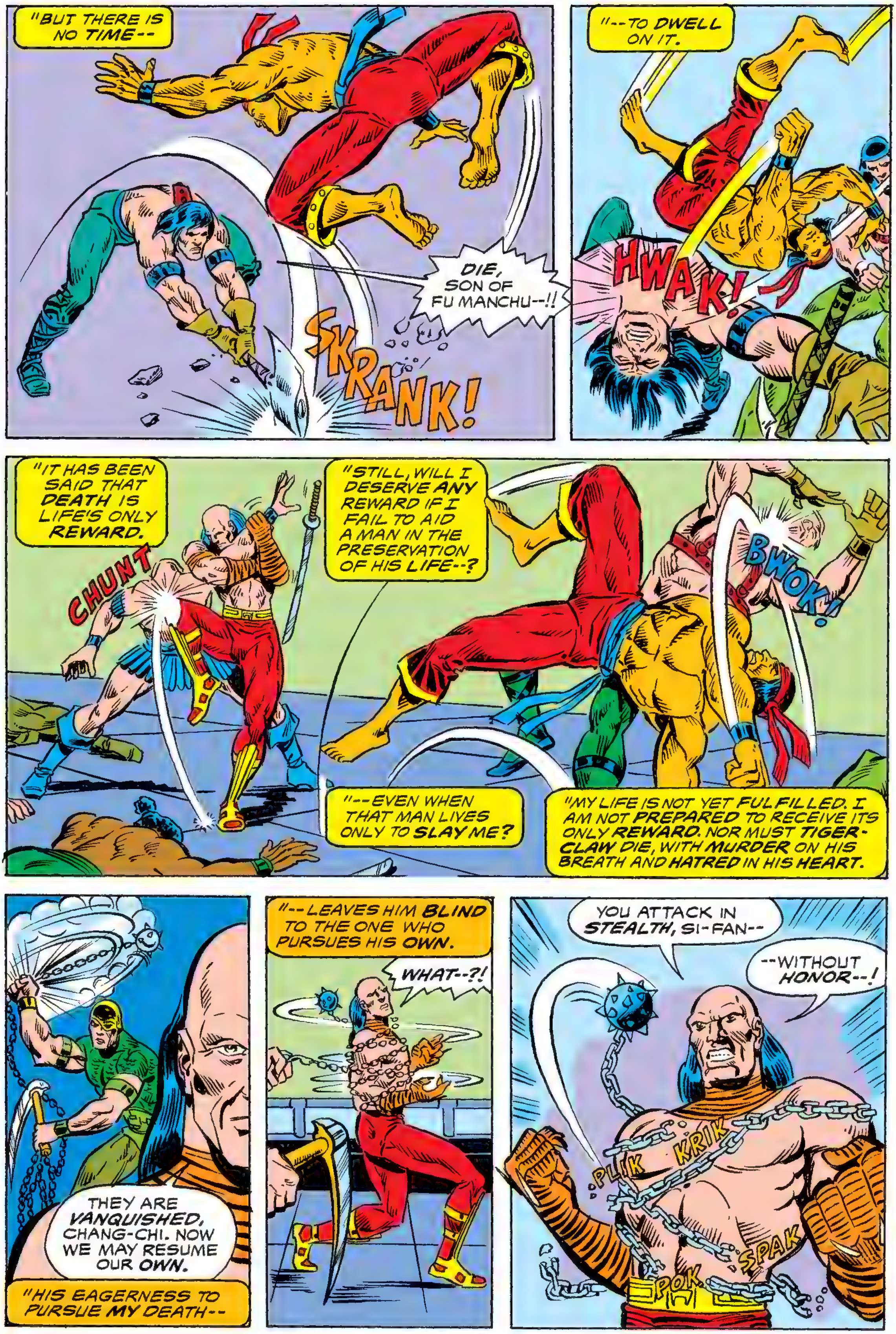

YOU MAY **SPEAK.**
WE HAVE LEARNED, O CELESTIAL ONE, THAT TIGER-CLAW HAS ENGINEERED A SERIES OF **BANK ROBBERIES** --FOR PURPOSES **UNKNOWN.**
THEN YOU HAVE **LOCATED** HIM?
WE HAVE LEARNED WHERE HE WILL APPEAR **TONIGHT,** HONORABLE FU MANCHU.
THEN **GO** TO HIM TONIGHT...
...AND PUNISH HIS TREACHEROUS APOSTASY WITH **DEATH.**
"WE REACHED THE **LUMBERYARD** LOCATED IN THE BOROUGH OF **BROOKLYN,** AS **DESCRIBED** TO ME BY THE TWO THIEVES--
THERE-- BEHIND THAT **FREIGHT-CAR,** SMITH--
--HIS **TAXI.** HACKSTABBER HAS ALREADY **ARRIVED.**
THEN WE'D BETTER **HURRY,** LAD. HE MAY BE IN DANGER RIGHT **NOW.**
YOU SAID A **MOUTHFUL,** SIR DENIS. A BLOKE AS ANNOYING AS THAT LITTLE **CABBIE** COULD DRIVE **ANYONE** TO KILL--
--LET ALONE HARDENED **CRIMINALS.**
ACME LUMBER CO.
YOU **READY,** CHI?
OFF-LIMITS
"I **AM** READY.
"MY LEAP CARRIES ME TOWARD THE FILTHY **SHACK** AS MY LEG **TENSES,** PREPARED TO KICK THROUGH THE--

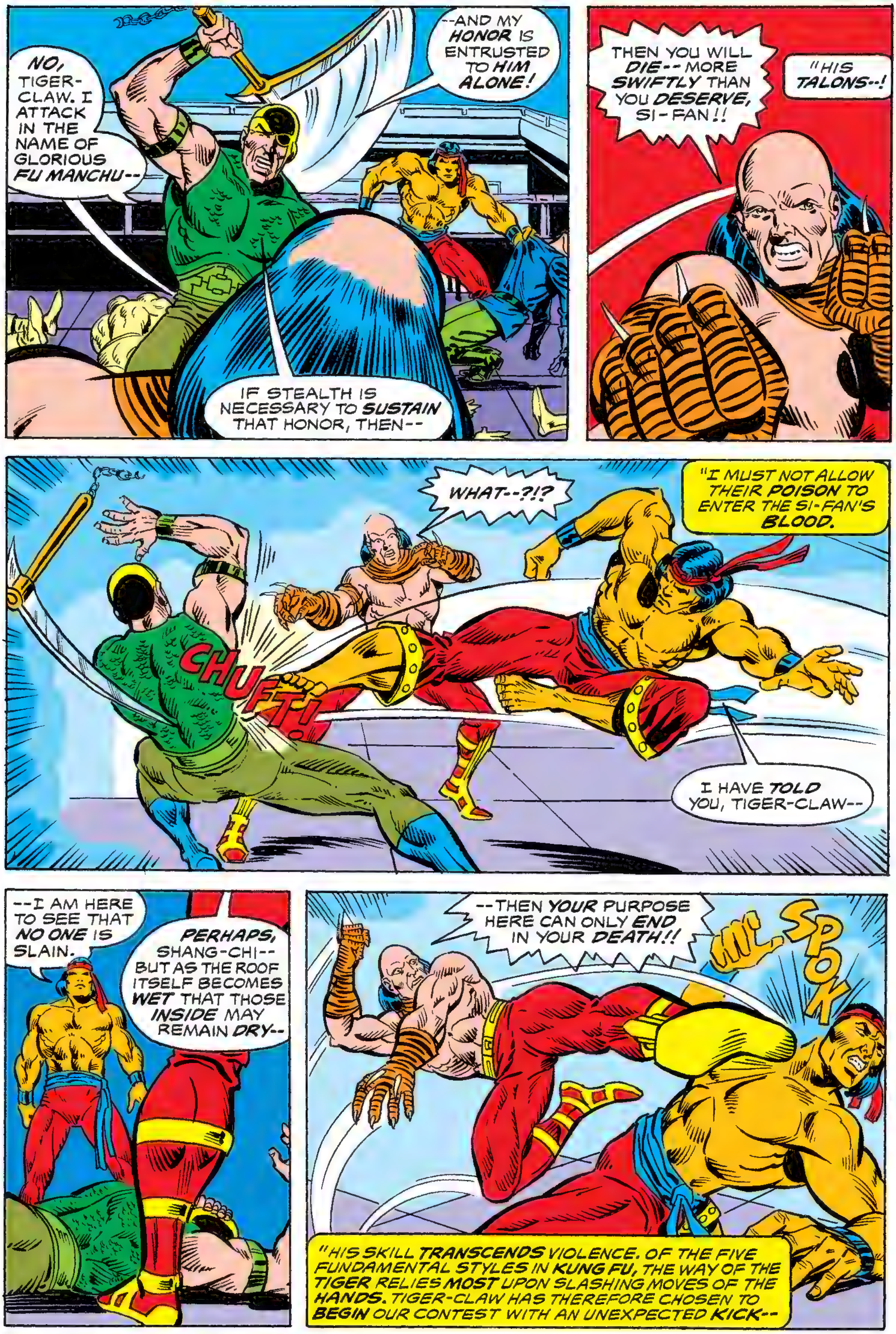

STUPID LITTLE WEASEL, BUSTIN' IN HERE LIKE THE CHARGE O' THE LIGHT BRIGADE. THE BOSS'LL PROB'LY TAKE ONE LOOK AT YOU AND--
"--DOOR.
KRATCH
BLAM
HUH!?
SPWOK
ONE MOVE AND THIS GUN PROVES IT AIN'T JUST A TOY.
NOW TALK. WHERE'S THE MONEY?
IT AIN'T HERE I SWEAR IT!
PSSST! CHANG-SHEE--! COME
"--?
WE GOT NO TIME TO LOSE, CHANG-SHEE! THOSE CROOKS ARE TELLIN' THE TRUTH-- THE ONLY MONEY THEY'VE GOT IS THEIR SHARE. I WAS IN THERE WHEN THE CONTACT MAN LEFT TO TAKE THE MAIN SHARE OF THE LOOT TO THE TIGER-CLAW BOZO.
I OVERHEARD 'EM MENTION WHERE THE DELIVERY WAS GONNA BE MADE. WE GOTTA HURRY.
"THE LITTLE MAN MAY BE CORRECT. WHERE RICHES ARE CONCERNED, TIME IS ALWAYS CRUCIAL.
SIR DENIS-- CHI AND THE CABBIE SLIPPED OUT. THEY'RE LEAVING...
YOU WANT ME TO FOLLOW 'EM, SIR?
SHANG-CHI CAN TAKE CARE OF HIMSELF, BLACK JACK. BESIDES, WE'VE STILL TO FIND OUT WHERE THE MONEY IS.
WE TOLD YA-- IT AIN'T HERE. ALL WE GOT IS OUR SHARE.
THEN WHERE IS THE REST OF IT?
ON ITS WAY TO THE BOSS--DUDE WHO CALLS HIMSELF TIGER-CLAW. HE'S S'POSED TO PICK IT UP AT ROCKEFELLER CENTER.

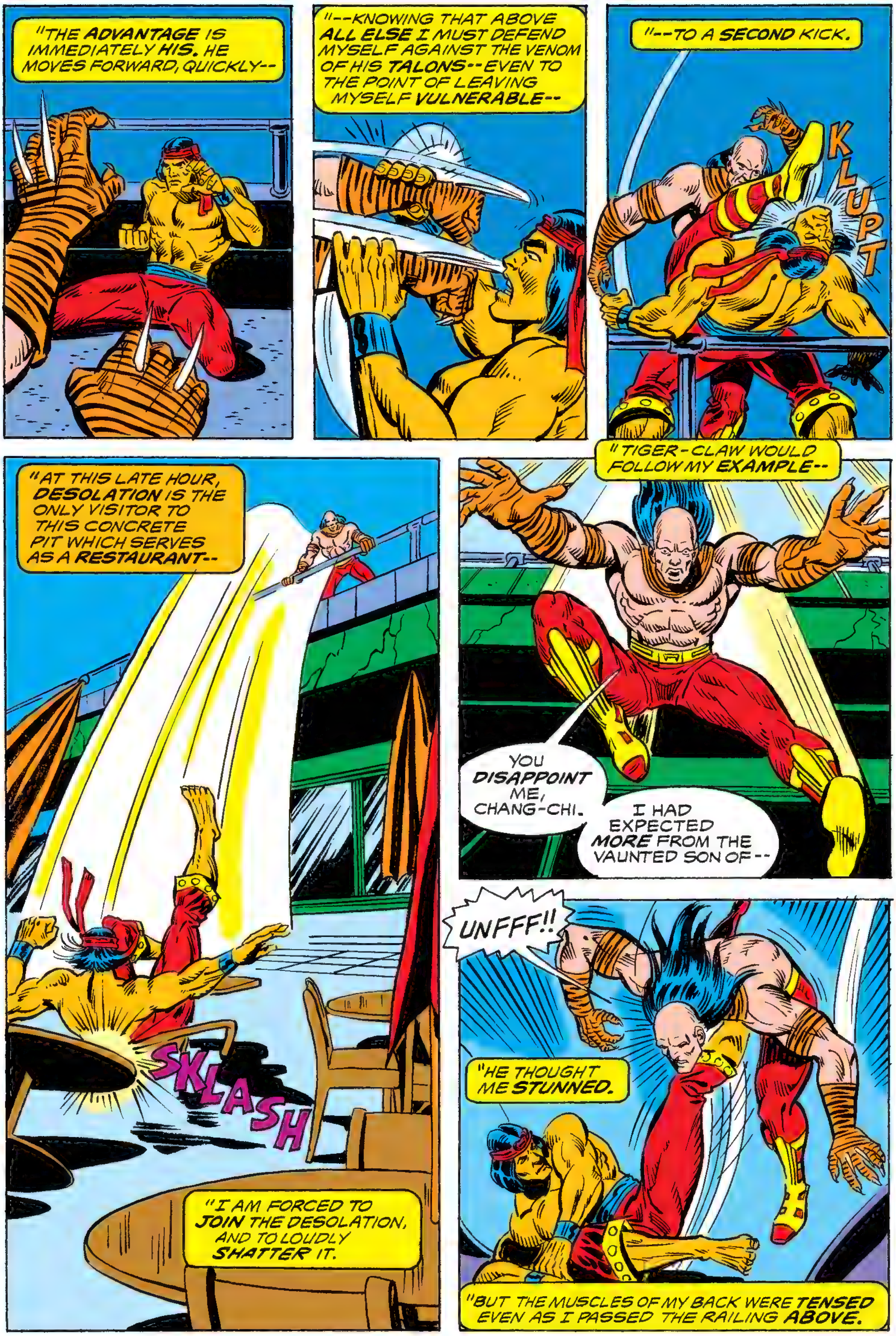

WHY THERE?
HOW'RE WE S'POSED TO KNOW? MAYBE HE DIDN'T WANNA BE TRAPPED INSIDE SOMEWHERE, OR MAYBE HE DIDN'T EVEN WANT US TO KNOW WHERE HE HOLES UP.
IT'S THE POLICE, SIR DENIS.
POLICE
RAUWW
AND NONE TOO SOON, BLACK JACK, THEY CAN TAKE OVER HERE WHILE WE PROCEED TO--
"ROCKEFELLER CENTER. THE NIGHT AIR IS COOL.
SHOOBEE DOOBEE DOO WAH--
--SHOOP SHOOBEE DOO--
YA GOT A MATCH, PAL?
NO, I AIN'T GOT A--
HUH--?! HOW DID YOU--
SMOT
NOT BAD FOR TEAMWORK, EH, CHANG-SHEE?
AH, NOW FOR THE PRIZE. THE MONEY--
--IS MINE.
SURRENDER IT OR DIE, SON OF FU MANCHU.
THERE ARE OTHER ALTERNATIVES OPEN TO HE WHO REFUSES SURRENDER, TIGER-CLAW.
ANOTHER ONE DECKED OUT FOR HALLOWEEN. THIS IS GETTIN' RIDICULOUS.
PERHAPS, SHANG-CHI-- BUT ONE OF US WILL DIE.
IF WE MUST FIGHT, I WOULD KNOW WHY. DO YOU SERVE MY FATHER, OR HAVE YOU TURNED AGAINST HIM IN THE SERVICE OF MY SISTER?
I SERVE NEITHER FU MANCHU, NOR FAH LO SUEE. I SERVE NO ONE. THE SI-FAN IS CRUMBLING, SHANG-CHI-- DIVIDED IN THE SPLIT BETWEEN FATHER AND DAUGHTER. WHY CHOOSE EITHER SIDE WHEN I MAY NOW GROW STRONGER THAN BOTH?
"A SOUND--

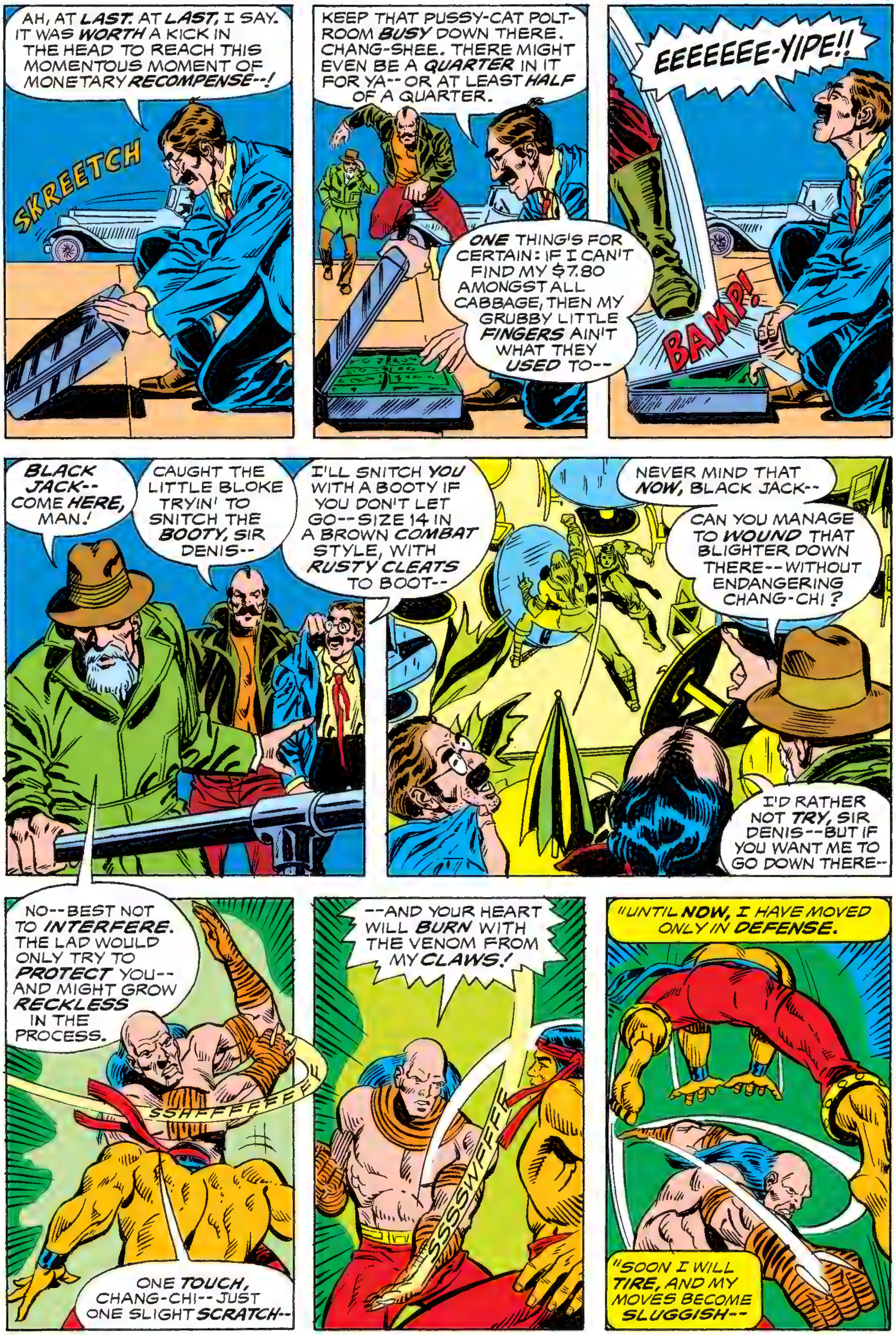

"--SCRAPING THE SOILED CITY DARKNESS PRIOR TO THEIR UNIFIED EMERGENCE--
THEY'RE EVERYWHERE! THEY'RE POURIN' OUTTA THE WOODWORK!
THEY'RE WEIRD!
"SI-FAN, AS THEIR PROLONGED AND SKILLFUL SILENCE INDICATED, BUT THEIR NUMBERS ARE GREATER THAN I HAD SENSED UPON FIRST ARRIVING HERE--
LEAVE WHILE YOU MAY, SON OF FU MANCHU. OUR BUSINESS TONIGHT DOES NOT CONCERN YOU. WE ARE HERE TO SLAY TIGER-CLAW.
AND I AM HERE TO SEE THAT NO ONE IS SLAIN.
"WEAPONS SHIFT AND MUSCLES TENSE IN A CIRCLE AROUND US. MY VOW OF LIFE IS TO THEM A CHALLENGE.
"IT HAS BEEN ACCEPTED.

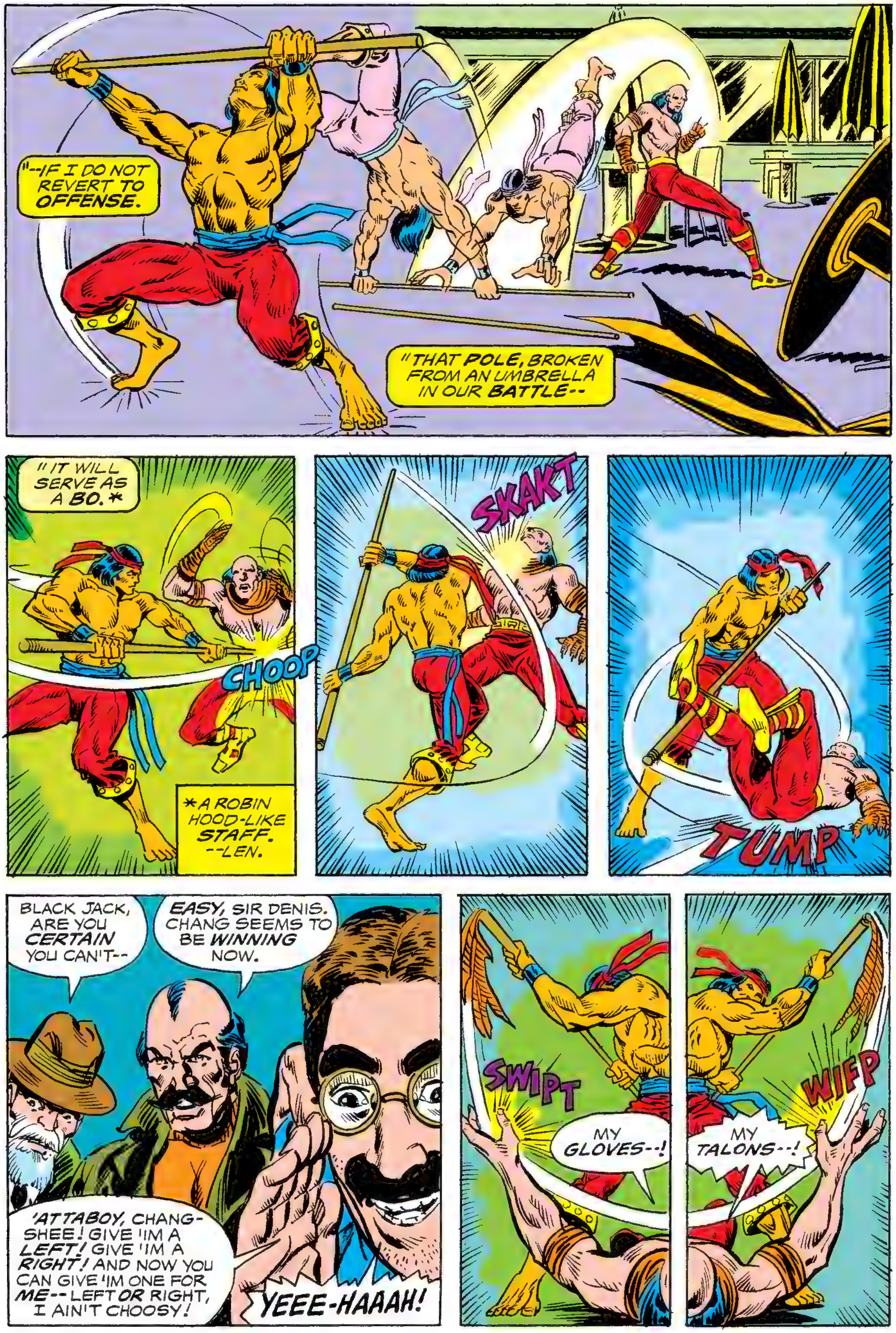

"THEY ATTACK.
NOW I'VE SEEN EVERYTHING-- AND IF YOU DON'T WATCH IT, CHANG-SHEE, YOU AIN'T GONNA SEE ANYTHING!
PWOK!
THOSE TWO BUTTER-KNIVES ALMOST TOOK OFF YOUR--
--HEAD--?
OH, MY ACHIN' HEAD--!
"THE AIR IS COOL. THE SHADOWS LONG, AND FLEETING. THERE IS NO TIME, AND A REASON BEYOND REASONING AS I UNITE WITH TIGER-CLAW AGAINST THE FANATICAL SI-FAN WARRIORS. WE MUST BATTLE THE STORM TOGETHER-- THAT WE MAY THEN BATTLE EACH OTHER, IN CALM--
KRUK!
"--AND WITHOUT INTERFERENCE.
SPLOW!
KWOK!
"I DO NOT UNDERSTAND MY UNDERSTANDING OF THIS FACT--
KRAK!
"--NOR DOES IT PLEASE ME.

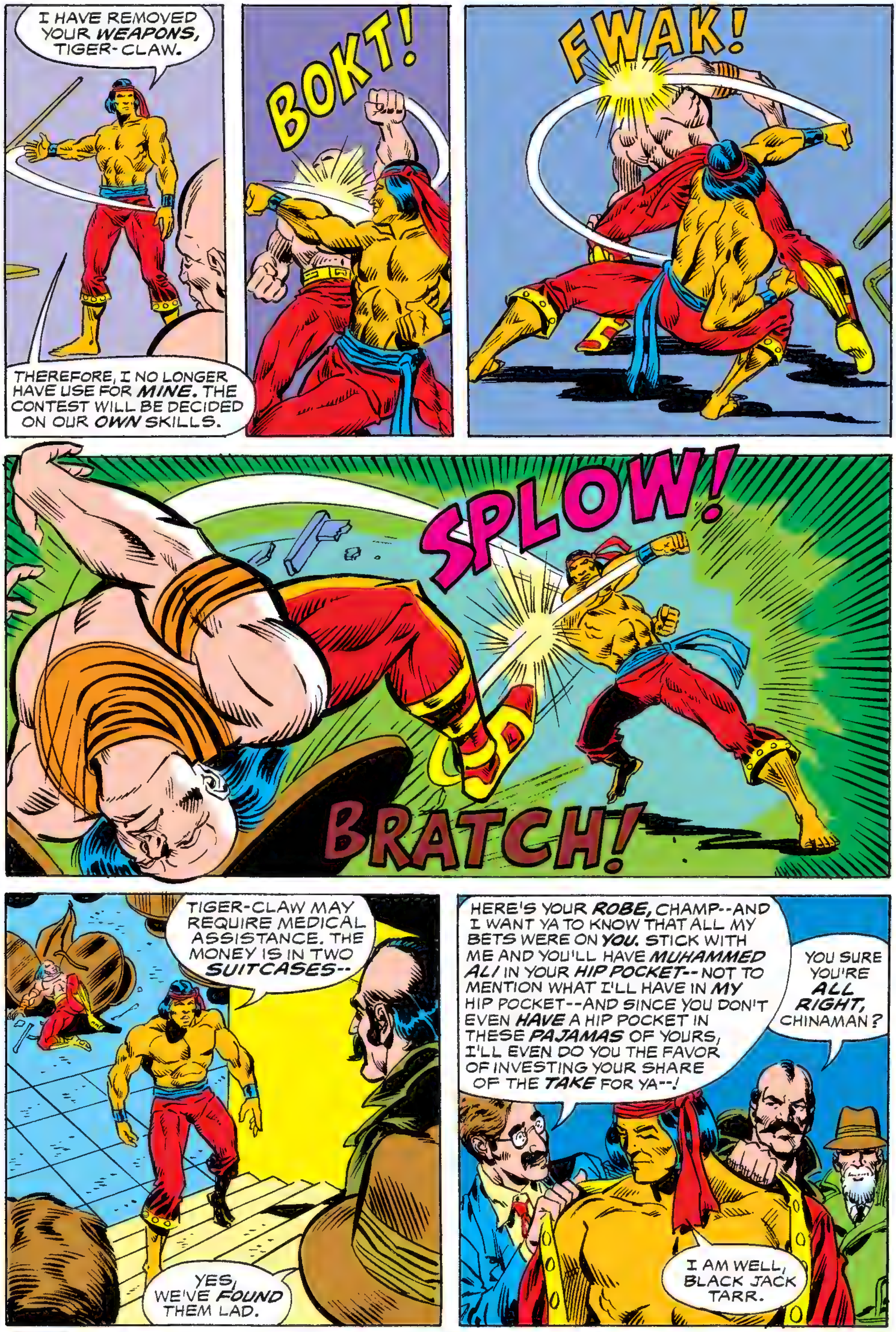

"BUT THERE IS NO TIME--
DIE, SON OF FU MANCHU--!!
SKRANK!
"--TO DWELL ON IT.
HWAK!
"IT HAS BEEN SAID THAT DEATH IS LIFE'S ONLY REWARD.
CHUNT
"STILL, WILL I DESERVE ANY REWARD IF I FAIL TO AID A MAN IN THE PRESERVATION OF HIS LIFE--?
BWOK!
"--EVEN WHEN THAT MAN LIVES ONLY TO SLAY ME?
"MY LIFE IS NOT YET FULFILLED. I AM NOT PREPARED TO RECEIVE ITS ONLY REWARD. NOR MUST TIGER-CLAW DIE, WITH MURDER ON HIS BREATH AND HATRED IN HIS HEART.
THEY ARE VANQUISHED, CHANG-CHI. NOW WE MAY RESUME OUR OWN.
"HIS EAGERNESS TO PURSUE MY DEATH--
"--LEAVES HIM BLIND TO THE ONE WHO PURSUES HIS OWN.
WHAT--?!
YOU ATTACK IN STEALTH, SI-FAN--
--WITHOUT HONOR--!
PLIK
KRIK
SPAK
POK

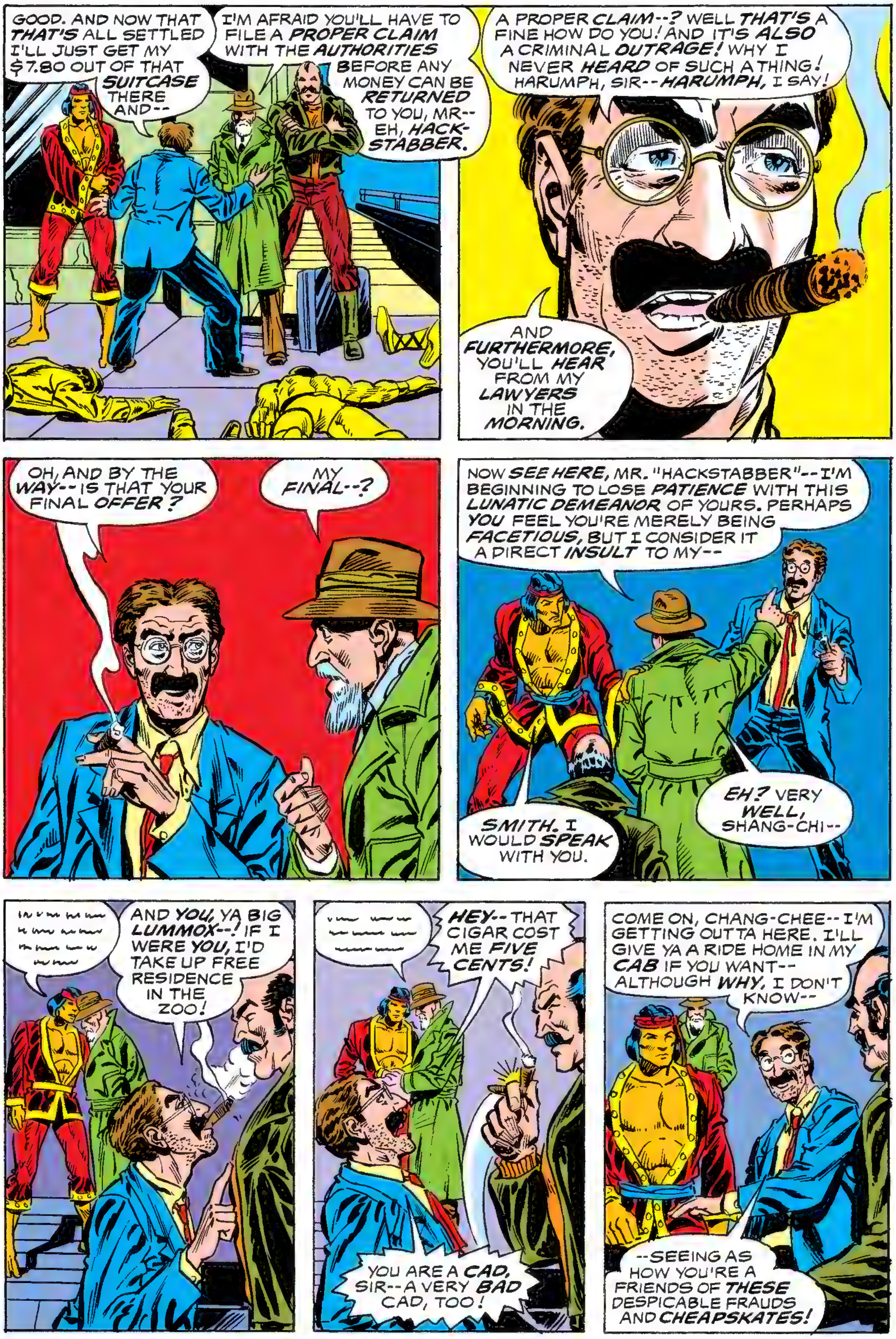

NO, TIGER-CLAW. I ATTACK IN THE NAME OF GLORIOUS FU MANCHU--
--AND MY HONOR IS ENTRUSTED TO HIM ALONE!
IF STEALTH IS NECESSARY TO SUSTAIN THAT HONOR, THEN--
THEN YOU WILL DIE-- MORE SWIFTLY THAN YOU DESERVE, SI-FAN!!
"HIS TALONS--!
WHAT--?!?
"I MUST NOT ALLOW THEIR POISON TO ENTER THE SI-FAN'S BLOOD.
CHUFT!
I HAVE TOLD YOU, TIGER-CLAW--
--I AM HERE TO SEE THAT NO ONE IS SLAIN.
PERHAPS, SHANG-CHI-- BUT AS THE ROOF ITSELF BECOMES WET THAT THOSE INSIDE MAY REMAIN DRY--
--THEN YOUR PURPOSE HERE CAN ONLY END IN YOUR DEATH!!
SPOK
"HIS SKILL TRANSCENDS VIOLENCE. OF THE FIVE FUNDAMENTAL STYLES IN KUNG FU, THE WAY OF THE TIGER RELIES MOST UPON SLASHING MOVES OF THE HANDS. TIGER-CLAW HAS THEREFORE CHOSEN TO BEGIN OUR CONTEST WITH AN UNEXPECTED KICK--

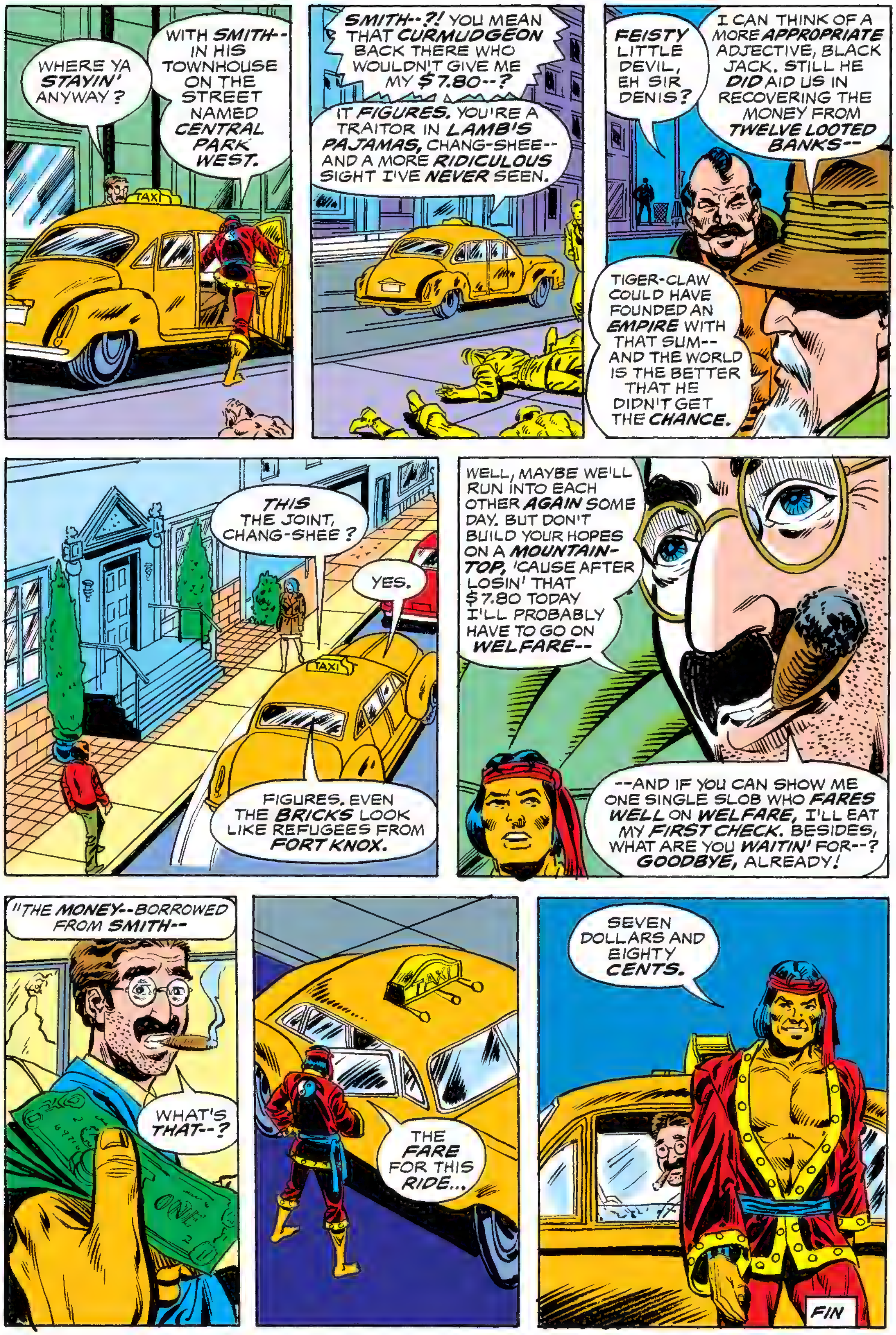

"THE ADVANTAGE IS IMMEDIATELY HIS. HE MOVES FORWARD, QUICKLY--
"--KNOWING THAT ABOVE ALL ELSE I MUST DEFEND MYSELF AGAINST THE VENOM OF HIS TALONS--EVEN TO THE POINT OF LEAVING MYSELF VULNERABLE--
"--TO A SECOND KICK.
KLUPT
"AT THIS LATE HOUR, DESOLATION IS THE ONLY VISITOR TO THIS CONCRETE PIT WHICH SERVES AS A RESTAURANT--
SKLASH
"I AM FORCED TO JOIN THE DESOLATION, AND TO LOUDLY SHATTER IT.
"TIGER-CLAW WOULD FOLLOW MY EXAMPLE--
YOU DISAPPOINT ME, CHANG-CHI.
I HAD EXPECTED MORE FROM THE VAUNTED SON OF--
UNFFF!!
"HE THOUGHT ME STUNNED.
"BUT THE MUSCLES OF MY BACK WERE TENSED EVEN AS I PASSED THE RAILING ABOVE.


AH, AT LAST. AT LAST, I SAY. IT WAS WORTH A KICK IN THE HEAD TO REACH THIS MOMENTOUS MOMENT OF MONETARY RECOMPENSE--!
SKREETCH
KEEP THAT PUSSY-CAT POLTROOM BUSY DOWN THERE. CHANG-SHEE. THERE MIGHT EVEN BE A QUARTER IN IT FOR YA-- OR AT LEAST HALF OF A QUARTER.
ONE THING'S FOR CERTAIN: IF I CAN'T FIND MY $7.80 AMONGST ALL CABBAGE, THEN MY GRUBBY LITTLE FINGERS AIN'T WHAT THEY USED TO--
EEEEEEE-YIPE!!
BAMP!
BLACK JACK-- COME HERE, MAN!
CAUGHT THE LITTLE BLOKE TRYIN' TO SNITCH THE BOOTY, SIR DENIS--
I'LL SNITCH YOU WITH A BOOTY IF YOU DON'T LET GO-- SIZE 14 IN A BROWN COMBAT STYLE, WITH RUSTY CLEATS TO BOOT--
NEVER MIND THAT NOW, BLACK JACK--
CAN YOU MANAGE TO WOUND THAT BLIGHTER DOWN THERE-- WITHOUT ENDANGERING CHANG-CHI?
I'D RATHER NOT TRY, SIR DENIS-- BUT IF YOU WANT ME TO GO DOWN THERE--
NO-- BEST NOT TO INTERFERE. THE LAD WOULD ONLY TRY TO PROTECT YOU-- AND MIGHT GROW RECKLESS IN THE PROCESS.
SSHFFFFFFFF
ONE TOUCH, CHANG-CHI-- JUST ONE SLIGHT SCRATCH--
--AND YOUR HEART WILL BURN WITH THE VENOM FROM MY CLAWS!
SSSSSWFFF
"UNTIL NOW, I HAVE MOVED ONLY IN DEFENSE.
"SOON I WILL TIRE, AND MY MOVES BECOME SLUGGISH--

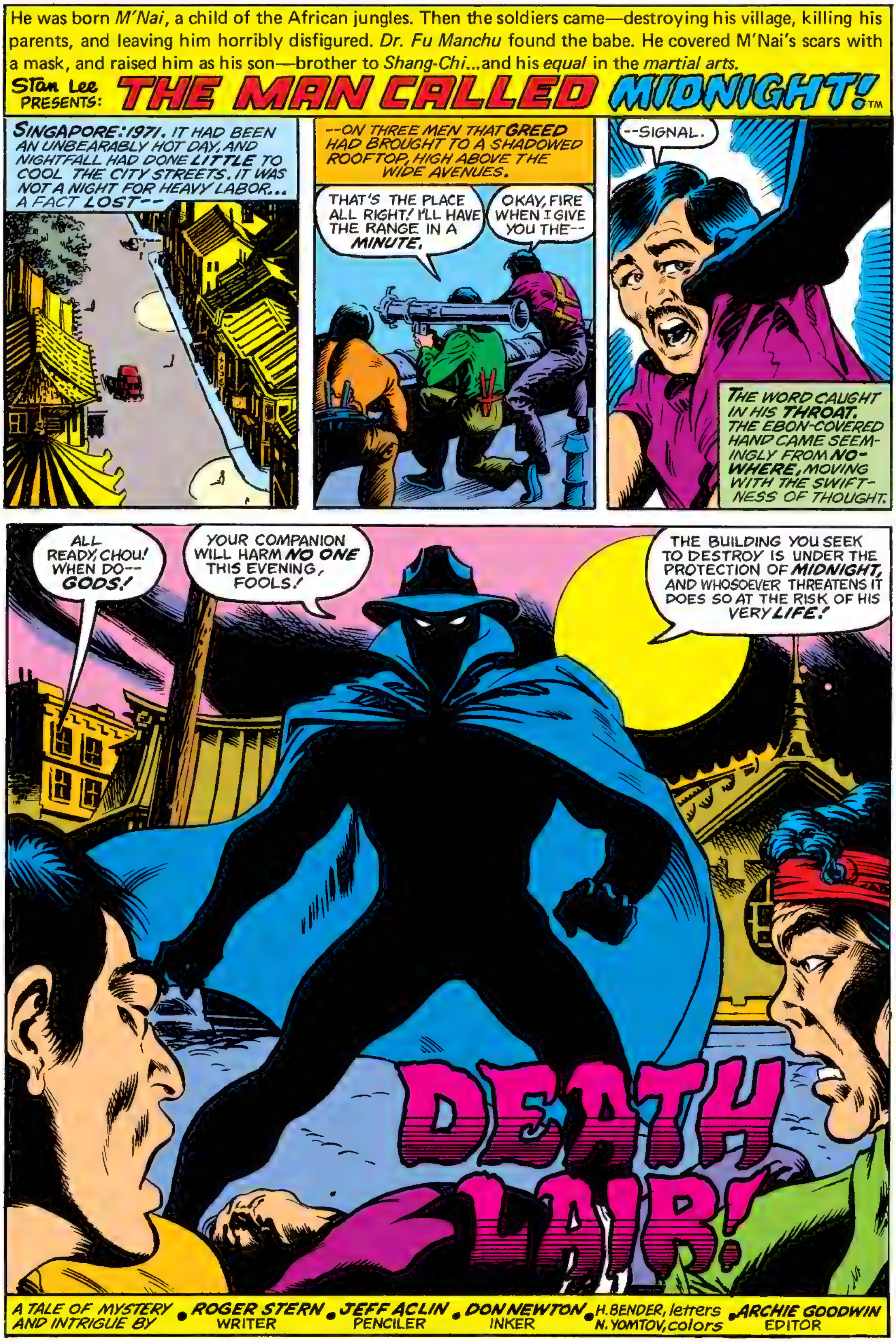

"--IF I DO NOT REVERT TO OFFENSE.
"THAT POLE, BROKEN FROM AN UMBRELLA IN OUR BATTLE--
"IT WILL SERVE AS A BO.*
CHOOP
*A ROBIN HOOD-LIKE STAFF. --LEN.
SKAKT
TUMP
BLACK JACK, ARE YOU CERTAIN YOU CAN'T--
EASY, SIR DENIS. CHANG SEEMS TO BE WINNING NOW.
'ATTABOY, CHANG-SHEE! GIVE 'IM A LEFT! GIVE 'IM A RIGHT! AND NOW YOU CAN GIVE 'IM ONE FOR ME-- LEFT OR RIGHT, I AIN'T CHOOSY!
YEEE-HAAAH!
SWIPT
MY GLOVES--!
WIFP
MY TALONS--!

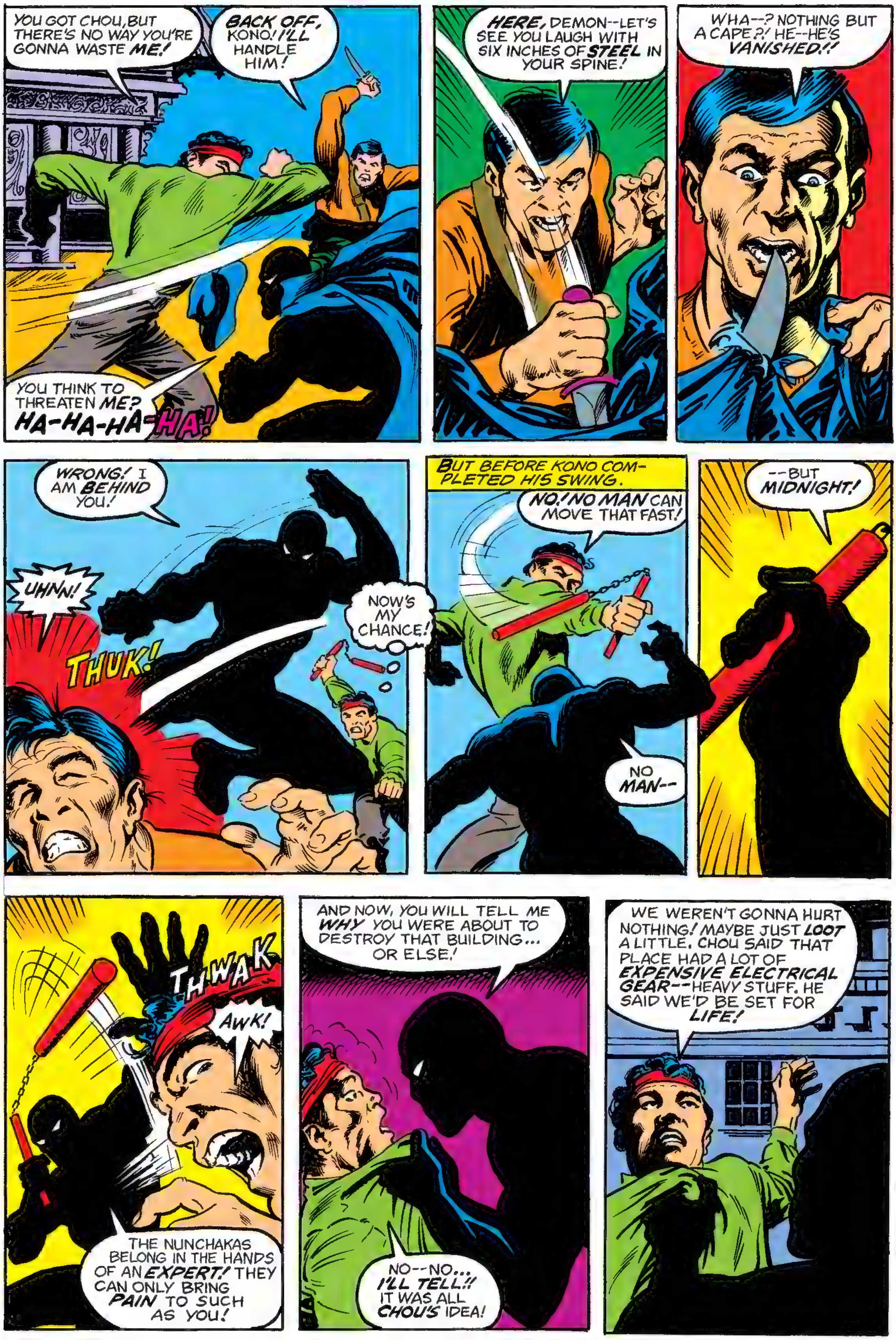

I HAVE REMOVED YOUR *WEAPONS,* TIGER-CLAW.
THEREFORE, I NO LONGER HAVE USE FOR *MINE.* THE CONTEST WILL BE DECIDED ON OUR *OWN* SKILLS.
BOKT!
FWAK!
SPLOW!
BRATCH!
TIGER-CLAW MAY REQUIRE MEDICAL ASSISTANCE. THE MONEY IS IN TWO *SUITCASES--*
YES, WE'VE *FOUND* THEM LAD.
HERE'S YOUR *ROBE,* CHAMP--AND I WANT YA TO KNOW THAT ALL MY BETS WERE ON *YOU.* STICK WITH ME AND YOU'LL HAVE *MUHAMMED ALI* IN YOUR *HIP POCKET--* NOT TO MENTION WHAT I'LL HAVE IN *MY* HIP POCKET--AND SINCE YOU DON'T EVEN *HAVE* A HIP POCKET IN THESE *PAJAMAS* OF YOURS, I'LL EVEN DO YOU THE FAVOR OF INVESTING YOUR SHARE OF THE *TAKE* FOR YA--!
YOU SURE YOU'RE *ALL RIGHT,* CHINAMAN?
I AM WELL, BLACK JACK TARR.

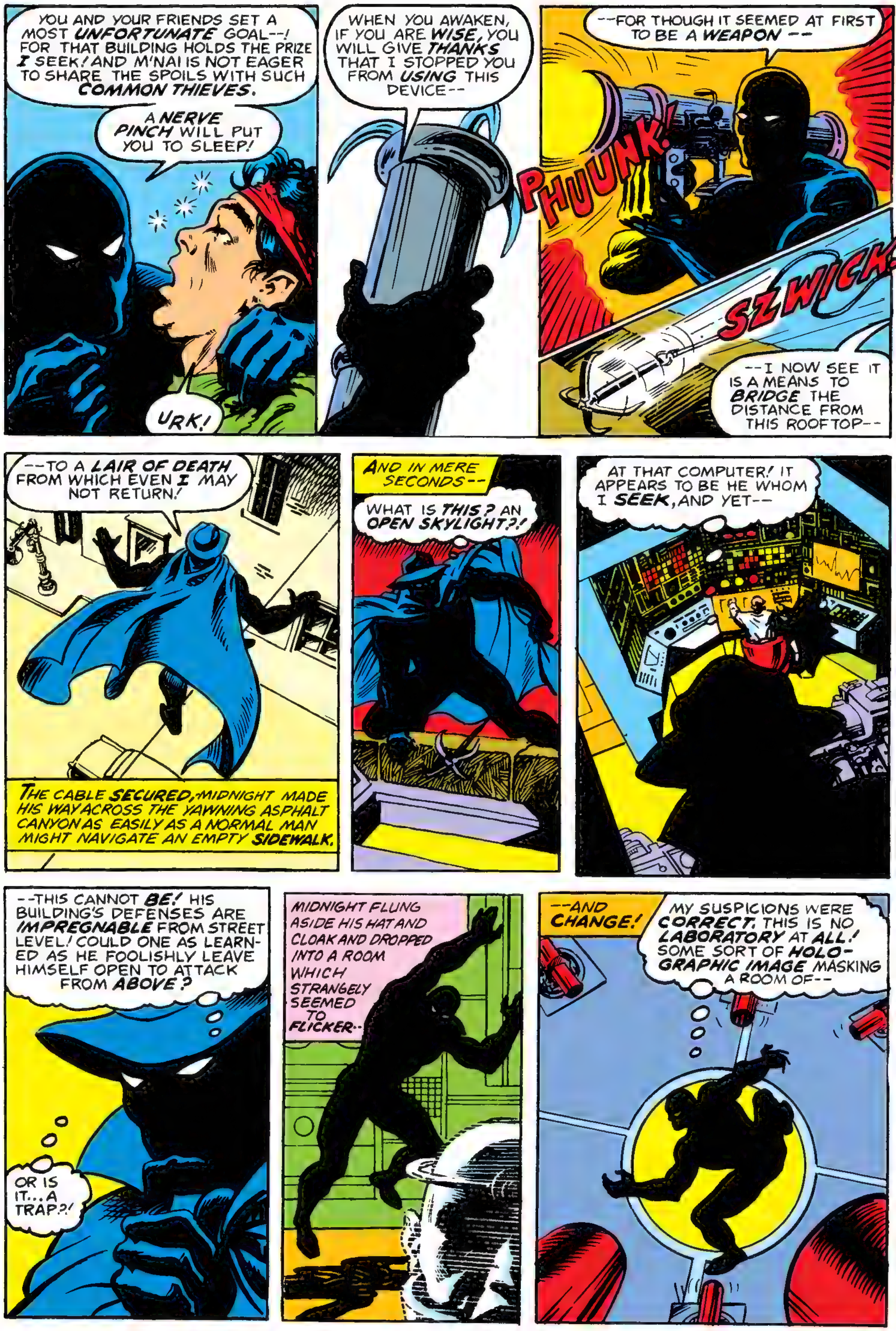

GOOD. AND NOW THAT THAT'S ALL SETTLED I'LL JUST GET MY $7.80 OUT OF THAT SUITCASE THERE AND--
I'M AFRAID YOU'LL HAVE TO FILE A PROPER CLAIM WITH THE AUTHORITIES BEFORE ANY MONEY CAN BE RETURNED TO YOU, MR-- EH, HACKSTABBER.
A PROPER CLAIM--? WELL THAT'S A FINE HOW DO YOU! AND IT'S ALSO A CRIMINAL OUTRAGE! WHY I NEVER HEARD OF SUCH A THING! HARUMPH, SIR--HARUMPH, I SAY!
AND FURTHERMORE, YOU'LL HEAR FROM MY LAWYERS IN THE MORNING.
OH, AND BY THE WAY--IS THAT YOUR FINAL OFFER?
MY FINAL--?
NOW SEE HERE, MR. "HACKSTABBER"--I'M BEGINNING TO LOSE PATIENCE WITH THIS LUNATIC DEMEANOR OF YOURS. PERHAPS YOU FEEL YOU'RE MERELY BEING FACETIOUS, BUT I CONSIDER IT A DIRECT INSULT TO MY--
SMITH. I WOULD SPEAK WITH YOU.
EH? VERY WELL, SHANG-CHI--
AND YOU, YA BIG LUMMOX--! IF I WERE YOU, I'D TAKE UP FREE RESIDENCE IN THE ZOO!
HEY--THAT CIGAR COST ME FIVE CENTS!
YOU ARE A CAD, SIR--A VERY BAD CAD, TOO!
COME ON, CHANG-CHEE--I'M GETTING OUTTA HERE. I'LL GIVE YA A RIDE HOME IN MY CAB IF YOU WANT--ALTHOUGH WHY, I DON'T KNOW--
--SEEING AS HOW YOU'RE A FRIENDS OF THESE DESPICABLE FRAUDS AND CHEAPSKATES!

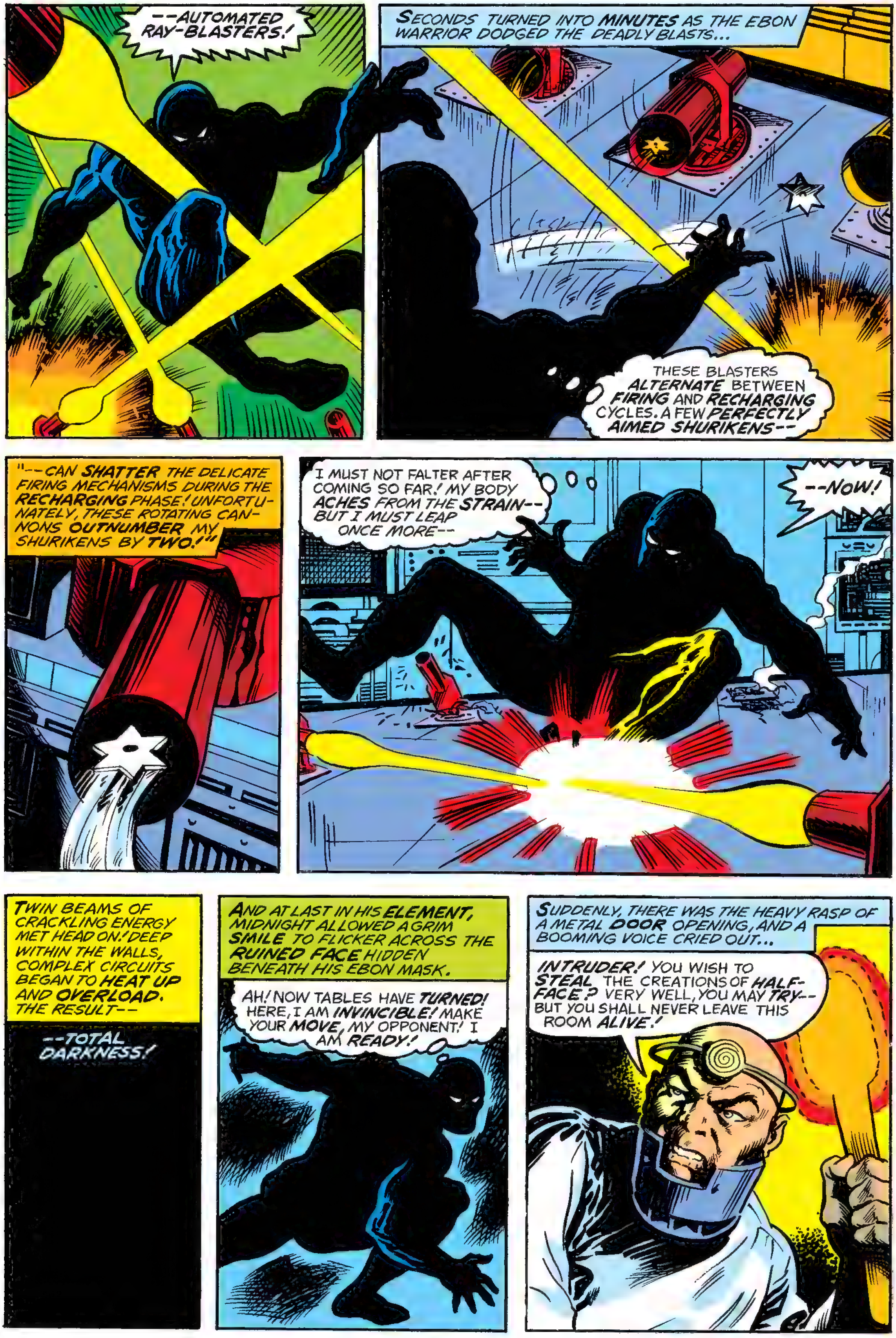

WHERE YA STAYIN' ANYWAY?
WITH SMITH-- IN HIS TOWNHOUSE ON THE STREET NAMED CENTRAL PARK WEST.
SMITH--?! YOU MEAN THAT CURMUDGEON BACK THERE WHO WOULDN'T GIVE ME MY $7.80--?
IT FIGURES. YOU'RE A TRAITOR IN LAMB'S PAJAMAS, CHANG-SHEE-- AND A MORE RIDICULOUS SIGHT I'VE NEVER SEEN.
FEISTY LITTLE DEVIL, EH SIR DENIS?
I CAN THINK OF A MORE APPROPRIATE ADJECTIVE, BLACK JACK. STILL HE DID AID US IN RECOVERING THE MONEY FROM TWELVE LOOTED BANKS--
TIGER-CLAW COULD HAVE FOUNDED AN EMPIRE WITH THAT SUM-- AND THE WORLD IS THE BETTER THAT HE DIDN'T GET THE CHANCE.
THIS THE JOINT, CHANG-SHEE?
YES.
FIGURES. EVEN THE BRICKS LOOK LIKE REFUGEES FROM FORT KNOX.
WELL, MAYBE WE'LL RUN INTO EACH OTHER AGAIN SOME DAY. BUT DON'T BUILD YOUR HOPES ON A MOUNTAIN-TOP, 'CAUSE AFTER LOSIN' THAT $7.80 TODAY I'LL PROBABLY HAVE TO GO ON WELFARE--
--AND IF YOU CAN SHOW ME ONE SINGLE SLOB WHO FARES WELL ON WELFARE, I'LL EAT MY FIRST CHECK. BESIDES, WHAT ARE YOU WAITIN' FOR--? GOODBYE, ALREADY!
"THE MONEY--BORROWED FROM SMITH--
WHAT'S THAT--?
THE FARE FOR THIS RIDE...
SEVEN DOLLARS AND EIGHTY CENTS.
FIN

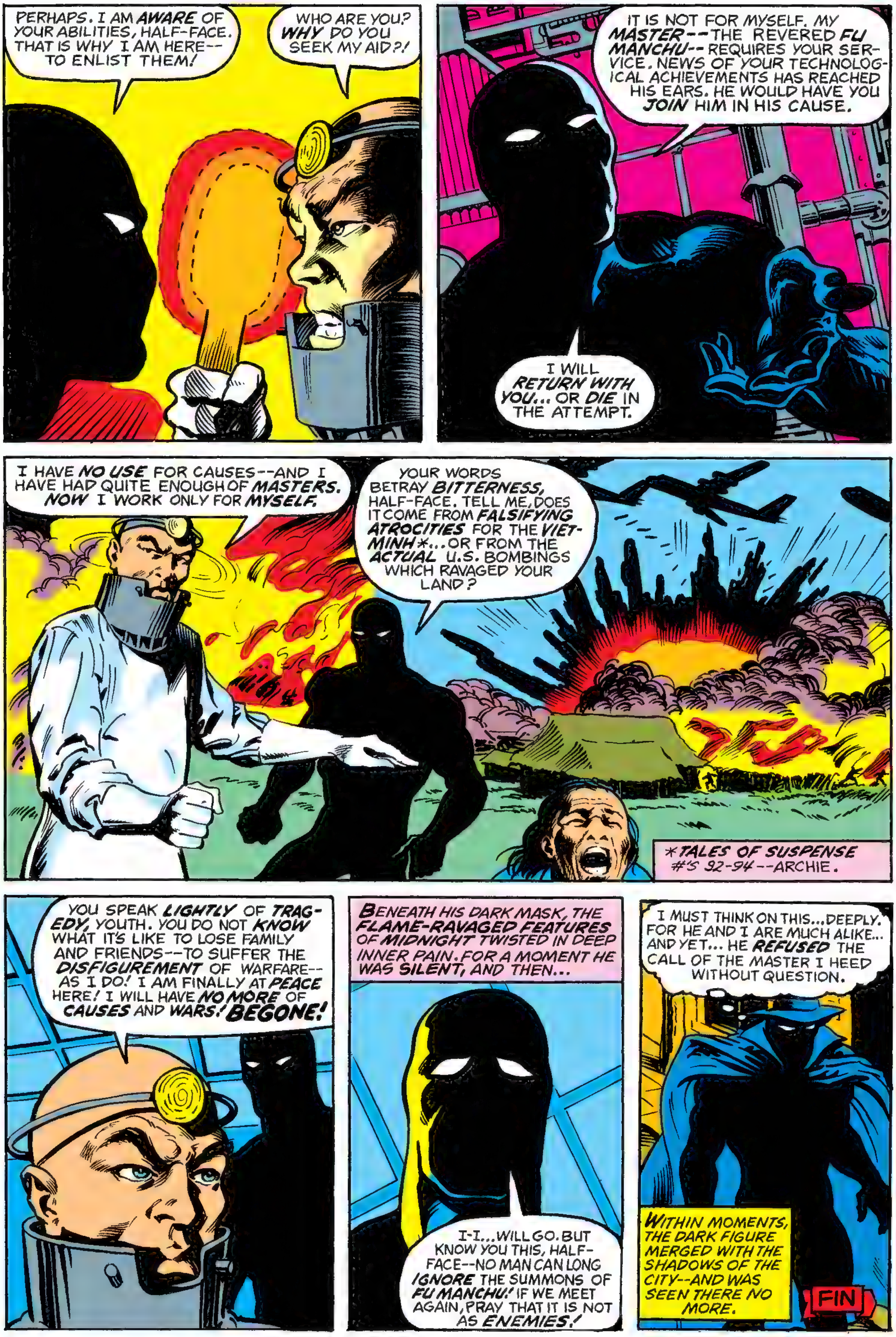
IN 1976, MARVEL COMMISSIONED A SERIES OF FIVE-TO-SIX-PAGE BACKUP STORIES TO BREAK IN ROOKIE TALENT AND RELIEVE DEADLINE PRESSURE WHEN REGULAR CREATIVE TEAMS RAN LATE. THE INITIATIVE WAS SHORT LIVED AND MANY OF THE BACKUP STORIES, INCLUDING THIS MIDNIGHT TALE FROM AUGUST 1977'S *IRON MAN ANNUAL* #4, SAW PRINT A YEAR OR MORE AFTER THEIR COMPLETION.

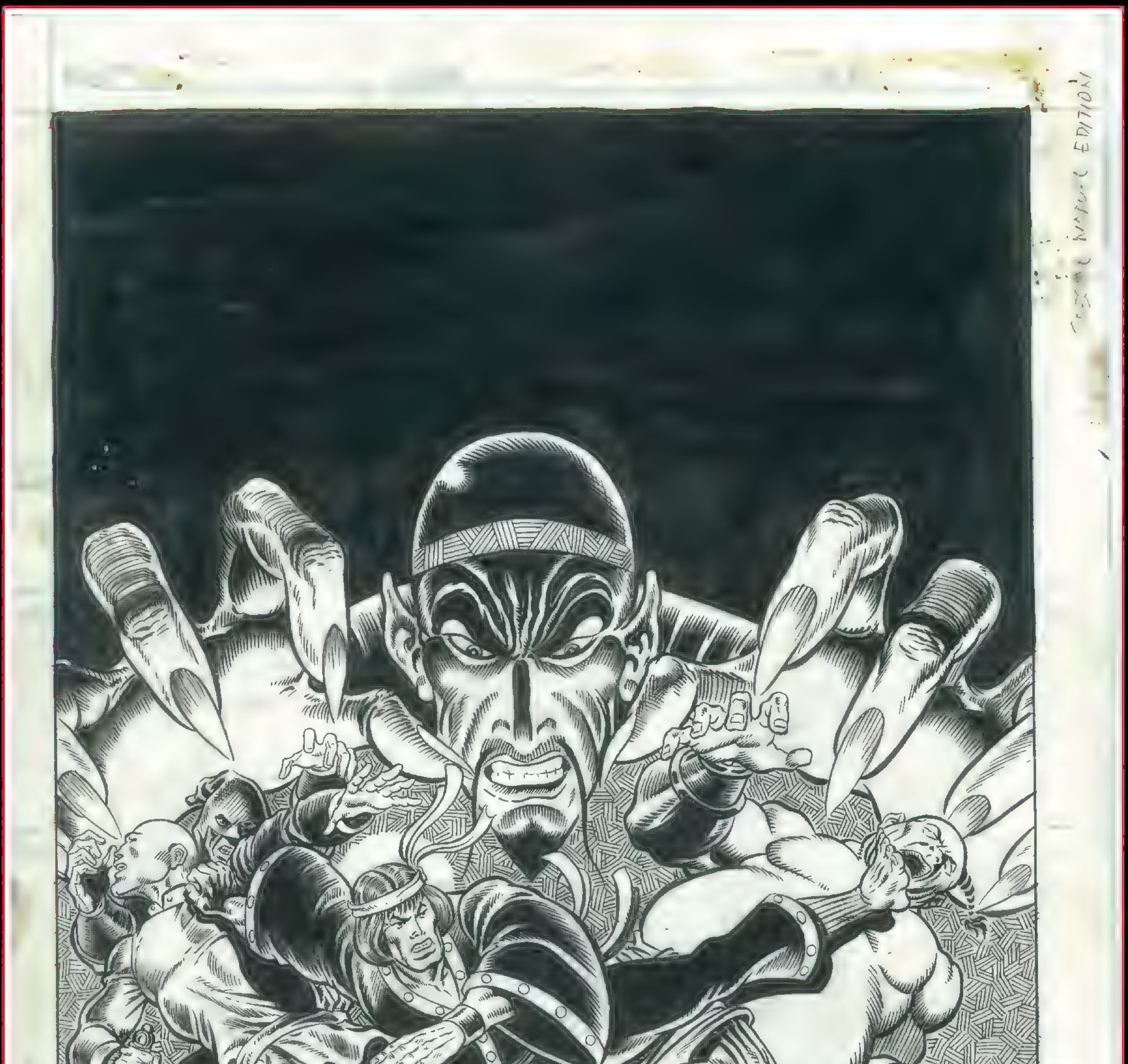

He was born *M'Nai*, a child of the African jungles. Then the soldiers came—destroying his village, killing his parents, and leaving him horribly disfigured. *Dr. Fu Manchu* found the babe. He covered M'Nai's scars with a mask, and raised him as his son—brother to *Shang-Chi*...and his *equal* in the *martial arts*.
Stan Lee PRESENTS: THE MAN CALLED MIDNIGHT!™
SINGAPORE: 1971. IT HAD BEEN AN UNBEARABLY HOT DAY, AND NIGHTFALL HAD DONE LITTLE TO COOL THE CITY STREETS. IT WAS NOT A NIGHT FOR HEAVY LABOR... A FACT LOST--
--ON THREE MEN THAT GREED HAD BROUGHT TO A SHADOWED ROOFTOP, HIGH ABOVE THE WIDE AVENUES.
THAT'S THE PLACE ALL RIGHT! I'LL HAVE THE RANGE IN A MINUTE.
OKAY, FIRE WHEN I GIVE YOU THE--
--SIGNAL.
THE WORD CAUGHT IN HIS THROAT. THE EBON-COVERED HAND CAME SEEMINGLY FROM NOWHERE, MOVING WITH THE SWIFTNESS OF THOUGHT.
ALL READY, CHOU! WHEN DO-- GODS!
YOUR COMPANION WILL HARM NO ONE THIS EVENING, FOOLS!
THE BUILDING YOU SEEK TO DESTROY IS UNDER THE PROTECTION OF MIDNIGHT, AND WHOSOEVER THREATENS IT DOES SO AT THE RISK OF HIS VERY LIFE!
DEATH LAIR!
A TALE OF MYSTERY AND INTRIGUE BY • ROGER STERN WRITER • JEFF ACLIN PENCILER • DON NEWTON INKER • H. BENDER, letters N. YOMTOV, colors • ARCHIE GOODWIN EDITOR


YOU GOT CHOU, BUT THERE'S NO WAY YOU'RE GONNA WASTE ME!
BACK OFF, KONO! I'LL HANDLE HIM!
YOU THINK TO THREATEN ME? HA-HA-HA-HA!
HERE, DEMON--LET'S SEE YOU LAUGH WITH SIX INCHES OF STEEL IN YOUR SPINE!
WHA--? NOTHING BUT A CAPE?! HE--HE'S VANISHED!!
WRONG! I AM BEHIND YOU!
UHNN!
THUK!
NOW'S MY CHANCE!
BUT BEFORE KONO COMPLETED HIS SWING.
NO! NO MAN CAN MOVE THAT FAST!
NO MAN--
--BUT MIDNIGHT!
THWAK
AWK!
THE NUNCHAKAS BELONG IN THE HANDS OF AN EXPERT! THEY CAN ONLY BRING PAIN TO SUCH AS YOU!
AND NOW, YOU WILL TELL ME WHY YOU WERE ABOUT TO DESTROY THAT BUILDING... OR ELSE!
NO--NO... I'LL TELL!! IT WAS ALL CHOU'S IDEA!
WE WEREN'T GONNA HURT NOTHING! MAYBE JUST LOOT A LITTLE. CHOU SAID THAT PLACE HAD A LOT OF EXPENSIVE ELECTRICAL GEAR--HEAVY STUFF. HE SAID WE'D BE SET FOR LIFE!


YOU AND YOUR FRIENDS SET A MOST **UNFORTUNATE** GOAL--! FOR THAT BUILDING HOLDS THE PRIZE **I** SEEK! AND M'NAI IS NOT EAGER TO SHARE THE SPOILS WITH SUCH **COMMON THIEVES.**
A **NERVE PINCH** WILL PUT YOU TO SLEEP!
URK!
WHEN YOU AWAKEN, IF YOU ARE **WISE,** YOU WILL GIVE **THANKS** THAT I STOPPED YOU FROM **USING** THIS DEVICE--
--FOR THOUGH IT SEEMED AT FIRST TO BE A **WEAPON** --
PHUUNK!
SZWICK!
--I NOW SEE IT IS A MEANS TO **BRIDGE** THE DISTANCE FROM THIS ROOFTOP--
--TO A **LAIR OF DEATH** FROM WHICH EVEN **I** MAY NOT RETURN!
THE CABLE **SECURED,** MIDNIGHT MADE HIS WAY ACROSS THE YAWNING ASPHALT CANYON AS EASILY AS A NORMAL MAN MIGHT NAVIGATE AN EMPTY **SIDEWALK.**
AND IN MERE SECONDS--
WHAT IS **THIS?** AN **OPEN SKYLIGHT?!**
AT THAT COMPUTER! IT APPEARS TO BE HE WHOM I **SEEK,** AND YET--
--THIS CANNOT **BE!** HIS BUILDING'S DEFENSES ARE **IMPREGNABLE** FROM STREET LEVEL! COULD ONE AS LEARNED AS HE FOOLISHLY LEAVE HIMSELF OPEN TO ATTACK FROM **ABOVE?**
OR IS IT... A TRAP?!
MIDNIGHT FLUNG ASIDE HIS HAT AND CLOAK AND DROPPED INTO A ROOM WHICH STRANGELY SEEMED TO FLICKER--
--AND **CHANGE!**
MY SUSPICIONS WERE **CORRECT.** THIS IS NO **LABORATORY** AT **ALL!** SOME SORT OF **HOLOGRAPHIC IMAGE** MASKING A ROOM OF--

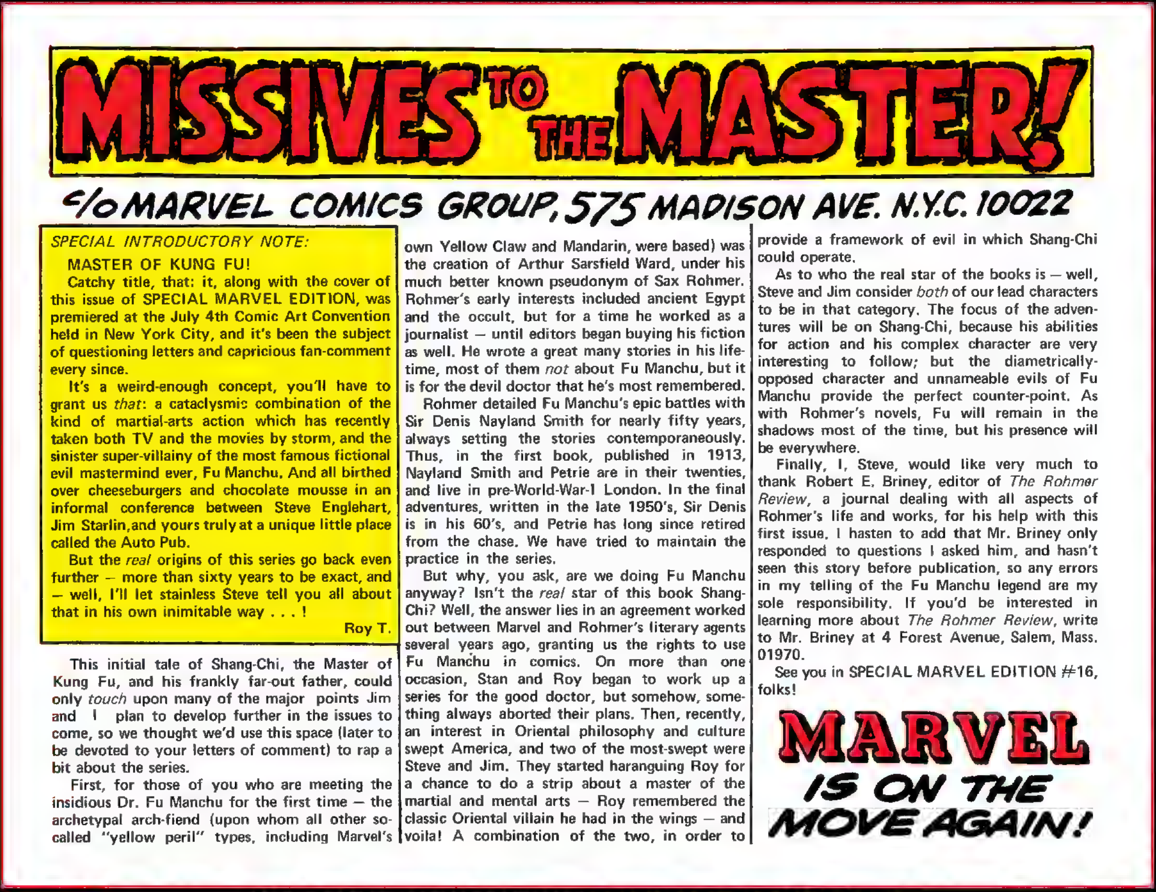

--AUTOMATED RAY-BLASTERS!
SECONDS TURNED INTO MINUTES AS THE EBON WARRIOR DODGED THE DEADLY BLASTS...
THESE BLASTERS ALTERNATE BETWEEN FIRING AND RECHARGING CYCLES. A FEW PERFECTLY AIMED SHURIKENS--
"--CAN SHATTER THE DELICATE FIRING MECHANISMS DURING THE RECHARGING PHASE! UNFORTUNATELY, THESE ROTATING CANNONS OUTNUMBER MY SHURIKENS BY TWO!"
I MUST NOT FALTER AFTER COMING SO FAR! MY BODY ACHES FROM THE STRAIN-- BUT I MUST LEAP ONCE MORE--
--NOW!
TWIN BEAMS OF CRACKLING ENERGY MET HEAD ON! DEEP WITHIN THE WALLS, COMPLEX CIRCUITS BEGAN TO HEAT UP AND OVERLOAD. THE RESULT--
--TOTAL DARKNESS!
AND AT LAST IN HIS ELEMENT, MIDNIGHT ALLOWED A GRIM SMILE TO FLICKER ACROSS THE RUINED FACE HIDDEN BENEATH HIS EBON MASK.
AH! NOW TABLES HAVE TURNED! HERE, I AM INVINCIBLE! MAKE YOUR MOVE, MY OPPONENT! I AM READY!
SUDDENLY, THERE WAS THE HEAVY RASP OF A METAL DOOR OPENING, AND A BOOMING VOICE CRIED OUT...
INTRUDER! YOU WISH TO STEAL THE CREATIONS OF HALF-FACE? VERY WELL, YOU MAY TRY-- BUT YOU SHALL NEVER LEAVE THIS ROOM ALIVE!


PERHAPS. I AM **AWARE** OF YOUR ABILITIES, HALF-FACE. THAT IS WHY I AM HERE-- TO ENLIST THEM!
WHO ARE YOU? **WHY** DO YOU SEEK MY AID?!
IT IS NOT FOR MYSELF. MY **MASTER**--THE REVERED **FU MANCHU**--REQUIRES YOUR SERVICE. NEWS OF YOUR TECHNOLOGICAL ACHIEVEMENTS HAS REACHED HIS EARS. HE WOULD HAVE YOU **JOIN** HIM IN HIS CAUSE.
I WILL **RETURN WITH YOU**... OR **DIE** IN THE ATTEMPT.
I HAVE **NO USE** FOR CAUSES--AND I HAVE HAD QUITE ENOUGH OF **MASTERS. NOW** I WORK ONLY FOR **MYSELF.**
YOUR WORDS BETRAY **BITTERNESS,** HALF-FACE. TELL ME, DOES IT COME FROM **FALSIFYING ATROCITIES** FOR THE **VIET-MINH***...OR FROM THE **ACTUAL** U.S. BOMBINGS WHICH RAVAGED YOUR LAND?
*TALES OF SUSPENSE #'S 92-94--ARCHIE.
YOU SPEAK **LIGHTLY** OF **TRAGEDY,** YOUTH. YOU DO NOT **KNOW** WHAT IT'S LIKE TO LOSE FAMILY AND FRIENDS--TO SUFFER THE **DISFIGUREMENT** OF WARFARE-- AS I DO! I AM FINALLY AT **PEACE** HERE! I WILL HAVE **NO MORE** OF **CAUSES** AND **WARS! BEGONE!**
BENEATH HIS DARK MASK, THE **FLAME-RAVAGED FEATURES** OF **MIDNIGHT** TWISTED IN DEEP INNER PAIN. FOR A MOMENT HE WAS **SILENT,** AND THEN...
I-I...WILL GO. BUT KNOW YOU THIS, HALF-FACE--NO MAN CAN LONG **IGNORE** THE SUMMONS OF **FU MANCHU!** IF WE MEET AGAIN, PRAY THAT IT IS NOT AS **ENEMIES!**
I MUST THINK ON THIS...DEEPLY. FOR HE AND I ARE MUCH ALIKE... AND YET... HE **REFUSED** THE CALL OF THE MASTER I HEED WITHOUT QUESTION.
WITHIN MOMENTS, THE DARK FIGURE MERGED WITH THE SHADOWS OF THE CITY--AND WAS SEEN THERE NO MORE.
FIN


GEMINI
GEMINI-

COURTESY ROMAIN VERLIER

SPECIAL MARVEL EDITION #15, COVER ORIGINAL ART, BY JIM STARLIN & AL MILGROM



MISSIVES TO THE MASTER!

c/o MARVEL COMICS GROUP, 575 MADISON AVE. N.Y.C. 10022

SPECIAL INTRODUCTORY NOTE:

MASTER OF KUNG FU!

Catchy title, that: it, along with the cover of this issue of SPECIAL MARVEL EDITION, was premiered at the July 4th Comic Art Convention held in New York City, and it's been the subject of questioning letters and capricious fan-comment every since.

It's a weird-enough concept, you'll have to grant us *that*: a cataclysmic combination of the kind of martial-arts action which has recently taken both TV and the movies by storm, and the sinister super-villainy of the most famous fictional evil mastermind ever, Fu Manchu. And all birthed over cheeseburgers and chocolate mousse in an informal conference between Steve Englehart, Jim Starlin, and yours truly at a unique little place called the Auto Pub.

But the *real* origins of this series go back even further – more than sixty years to be exact, and – well, I'll let stainless Steve tell you all about that in his own inimitable way . . . !

Roy T.

This initial tale of Shang-Chi, the Master of Kung Fu, and his frankly far-out father, could only *touch* upon many of the major points Jim and I plan to develop further in the issues to come, so we thought we'd use this space (later to be devoted to your letters of comment) to rap a bit about the series.

First, for those of you who are meeting the insidious Dr. Fu Manchu for the first time – the archetypal arch-fiend (upon whom all other so-called "yellow peril" types, including Marvel's own Yellow Claw and Mandarin, were based) was the creation of Arthur Sarsfield Ward, under his much better known pseudonym of Sax Rohmer. Rohmer's early interests included ancient Egypt and the occult, but for a time he worked as a journalist – until editors began buying his fiction as well. He wrote a great many stories in his lifetime, most of them *not* about Fu Manchu, but it is for the devil doctor that he's most remembered.

Rohmer detailed Fu Manchu's epic battles with Sir Denis Nayland Smith for nearly fifty years, always setting the stories contemporaneously. Thus, in the first book, published in 1913, Nayland Smith and Petrie are in their twenties, and live in pre-World-War-I London. In the final adventures, written in the late 1950's, Sir Denis is in his 60's, and Petrie has long since retired from the chase. We have tried to maintain the practice in the series.

But why, you ask, are we doing Fu Manchu anyway? Isn't the *real* star of this book Shang-Chi? Well, the answer lies in an agreement worked out between Marvel and Rohmer's literary agents several years ago, granting us the rights to use Fu Manchu in comics. On more than one occasion, Stan and Roy began to work up a series for the good doctor, but somehow, something always aborted their plans. Then, recently, an interest in Oriental philosophy and culture swept America, and two of the most-swept were Steve and Jim. They started haranguing Roy for a chance to do a strip about a master of the martial and mental arts – Roy remembered the classic Oriental villain he had in the wings – and voila! A combination of the two, in order to provide a framework of evil in which Shang-Chi could operate.

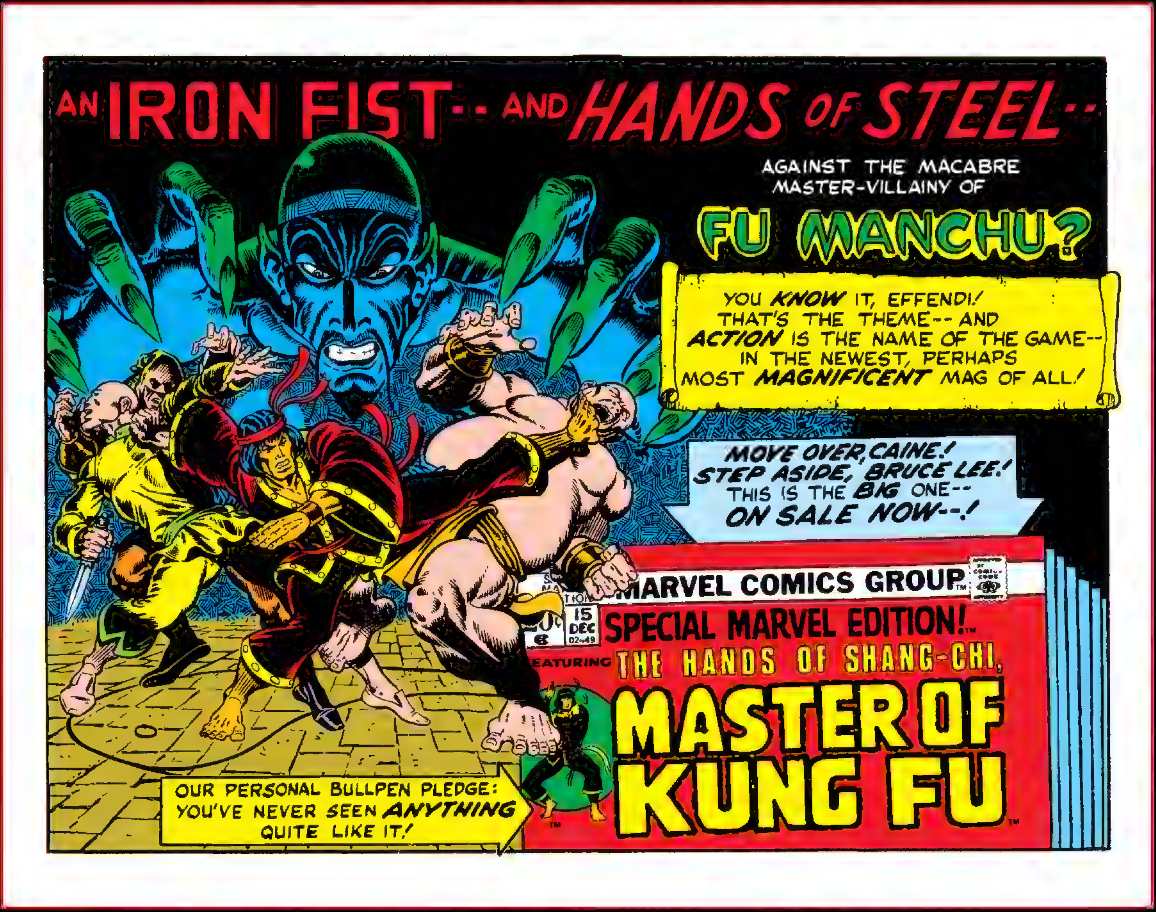
As to who the real star of the books is – well, Steve and Jim consider *both* of our lead characters to be in that category. The focus of the adventures will be on Shang-Chi, because his abilities for action and his complex character are very interesting to follow; but the diametrically-opposed character and unnameable evils of Fu Manchu provide the perfect counter-point. As with Rohmer's novels, Fu will remain in the shadows most of the time, but his presence will be everywhere.

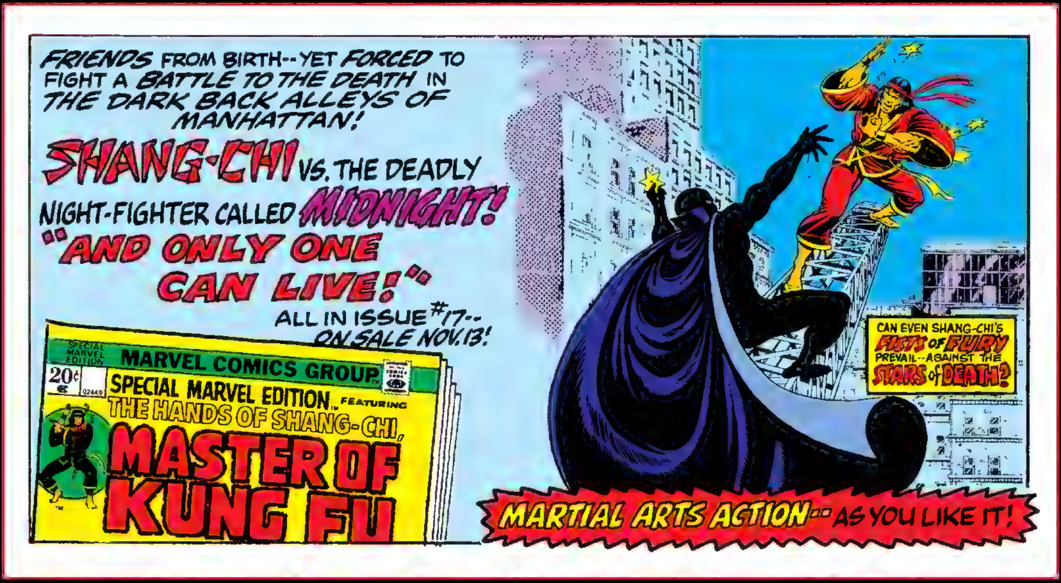
Finally, I, Steve, would like very much to thank Robert E. Briney, editor of *The Rohmer Review*, a journal dealing with all aspects of Rohmer's life and works, for his help with this first issue. I hasten to add that Mr. Briney only responded to questions I asked him, and hasn't seen this story before publication, so any errors in my telling of the Fu Manchu legend are my sole responsibility. If you'd be interested in learning more about *The Rohmer Review*, write to Mr. Briney at 4 Forest Avenue, Salem, Mass. 01970.

See you in SPECIAL MARVEL EDITION #16, folks!

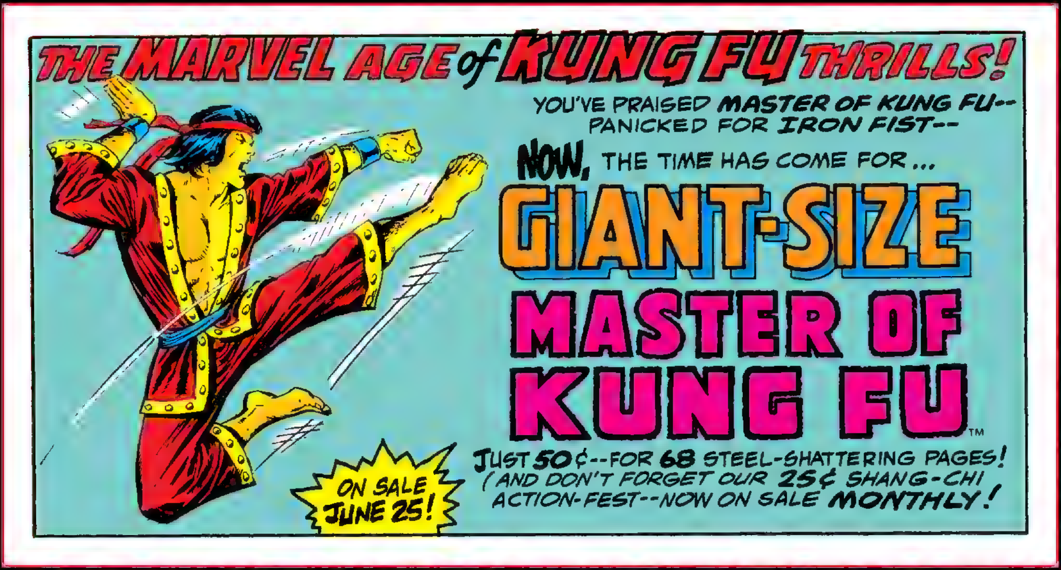
MARVEL
IS ON THE MOVE AGAIN!

TOP: *SPECIAL MARVEL EDITION* **#15 EDITORIAL, BY ROY THOMAS**
BOTTOM: *SPECIAL MARVEL EDITION* **#15 HOUSE AD, FROM DECEMBER 1973 TITLES**

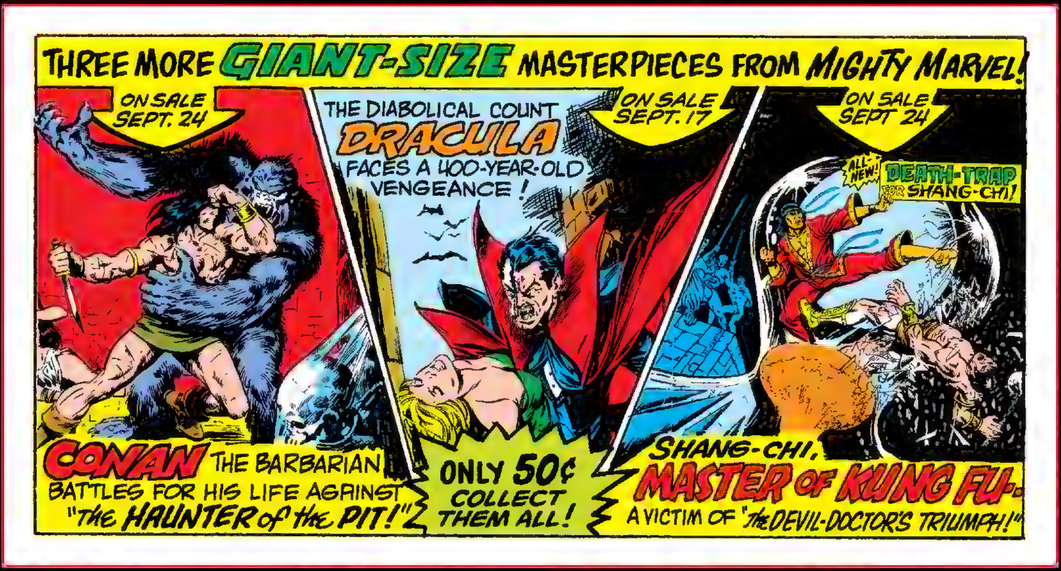

AN IRON FIST-- AND HANDS OF STEEL--
AGAINST THE MACABRE MASTER-VILLAINY OF
FU MANCHU?
YOU KNOW IT, EFFENDI! THAT'S THE THEME-- AND ACTION IS THE NAME OF THE GAME-- IN THE NEWEST, PERHAPS MOST MAGNIFICENT MAG OF ALL!
MOVE OVER, CAINE! STEP ASIDE, BRUCE LEE! THIS IS THE BIG ONE-- ON SALE NOW--!
MARVEL COMICS GROUP
15 DEC
SPECIAL MARVEL EDITION!
FEATURING THE HANDS OF SHANG-CHI, MASTER OF KUNG FU
OUR PERSONAL BULLPEN PLEDGE: YOU'VE NEVER SEEN ANYTHING QUITE LIKE IT!


FRIENDS FROM BIRTH--YET FORCED TO FIGHT A BATTLE TO THE DEATH IN THE DARK BACK ALLEYS OF MANHATTAN!
SHANG-CHI VS. THE DEADLY NIGHT-FIGHTER CALLED MIDNIGHT!
"AND ONLY ONE CAN LIVE!"
ALL IN ISSUE #17--ON SALE NOV. 13!
SPECIAL MARVEL EDITION
MARVEL COMICS GROUP
20¢
SPECIAL MARVEL EDITION FEATURING
THE HANDS OF SHANG-CHI, MASTER OF KUNG FU
CAN EVEN SHANG-CHI'S FISTS of FURY PREVAIL--AGAINST THE STARS of DEATH?
MARTIAL ARTS ACTION-- AS YOU LIKE IT!

SPECIAL MARVEL EDITION #16 HOUSE AD, FROM FEBRUARY 1974 TITLES


THE MARVEL AGE of KUNG FU THRILLS!
YOU'VE PRAISED MASTER OF KUNG FU-- PANICKED FOR IRON FIST--
NOW, THE TIME HAS COME FOR...
GIANT-SIZE MASTER OF KUNG FU™
ON SALE JUNE 25!
JUST 50¢--FOR 68 STEEL-SHATTERING PAGES! (AND DON'T FORGET OUR 25¢ SHANG-CHI ACTION-FEST--NOW ON SALE MONTHLY!

GIANT-SIZE MASTER OF KUNG FU #1 HOUSE AD, FROM AUGUST 1974 TITLES


THREE MORE GIANT-SIZE MASTERPIECES FROM MIGHTY MARVEL!
ON SALE SEPT. 24
THE DIABOLICAL COUNT DRACULA FACES A 400-YEAR-OLD VENGEANCE!
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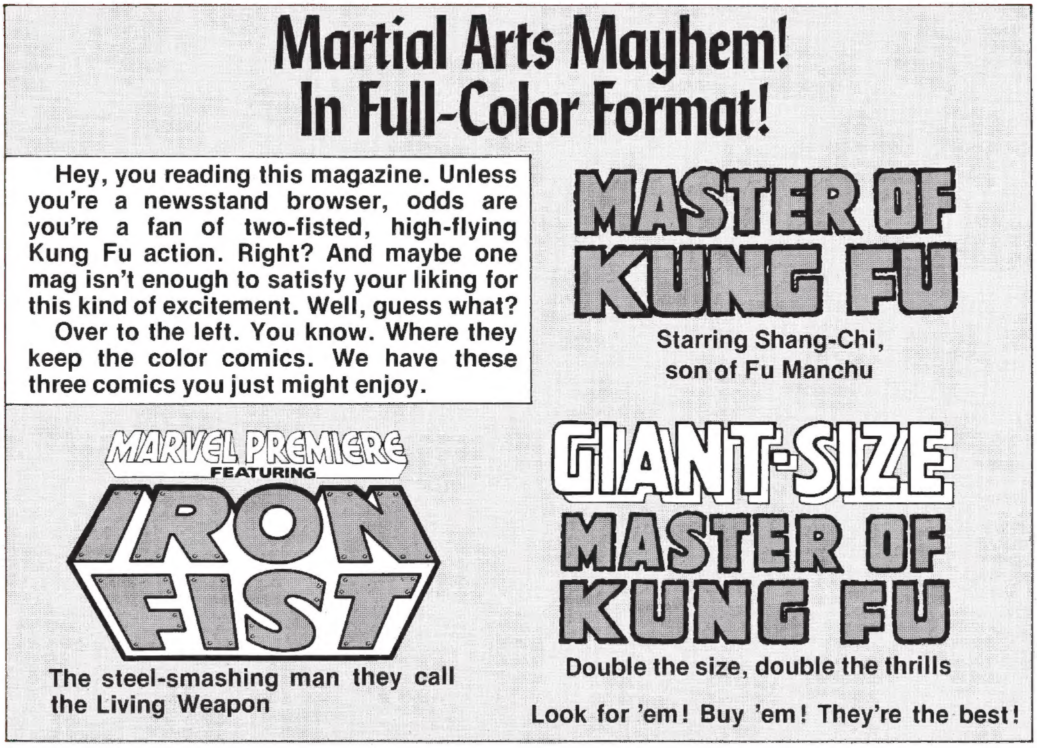

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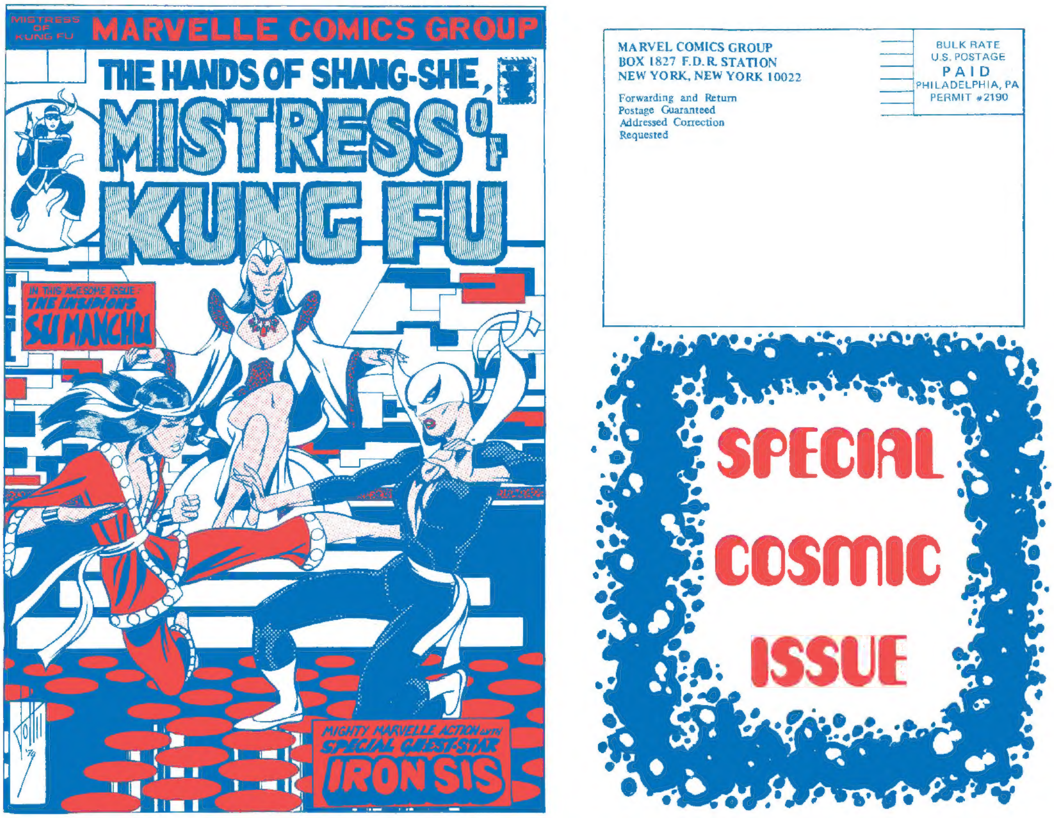
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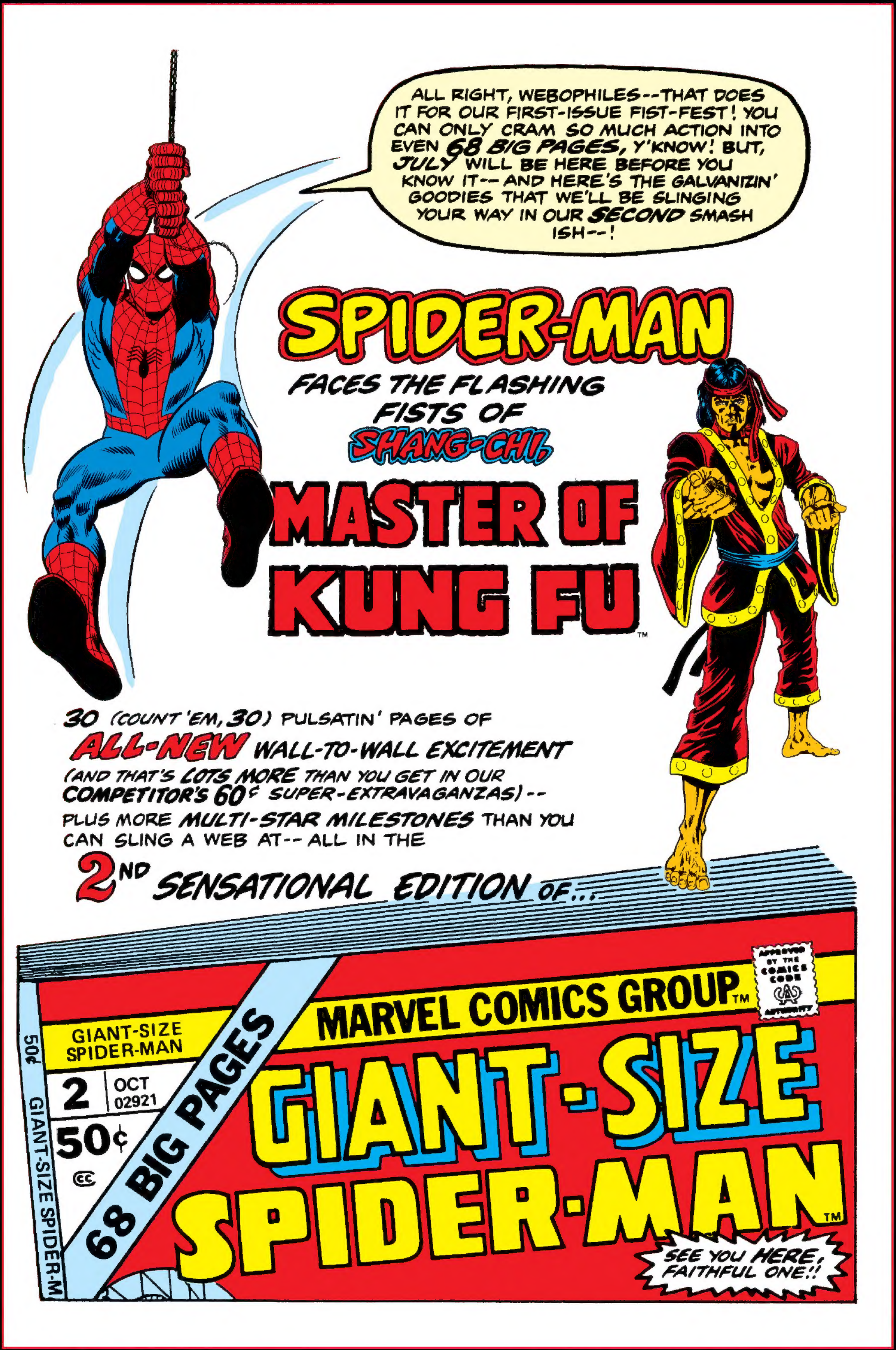
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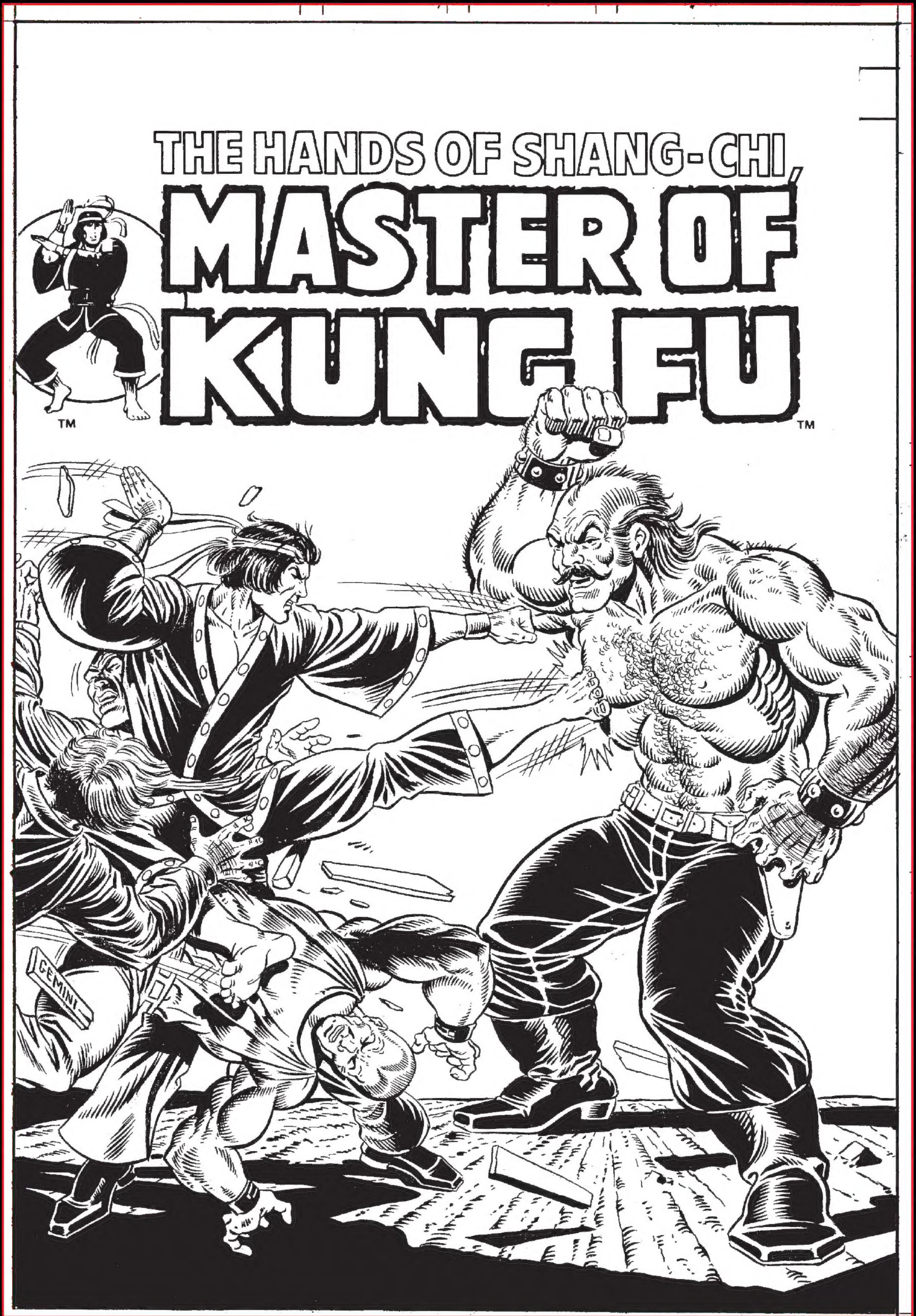
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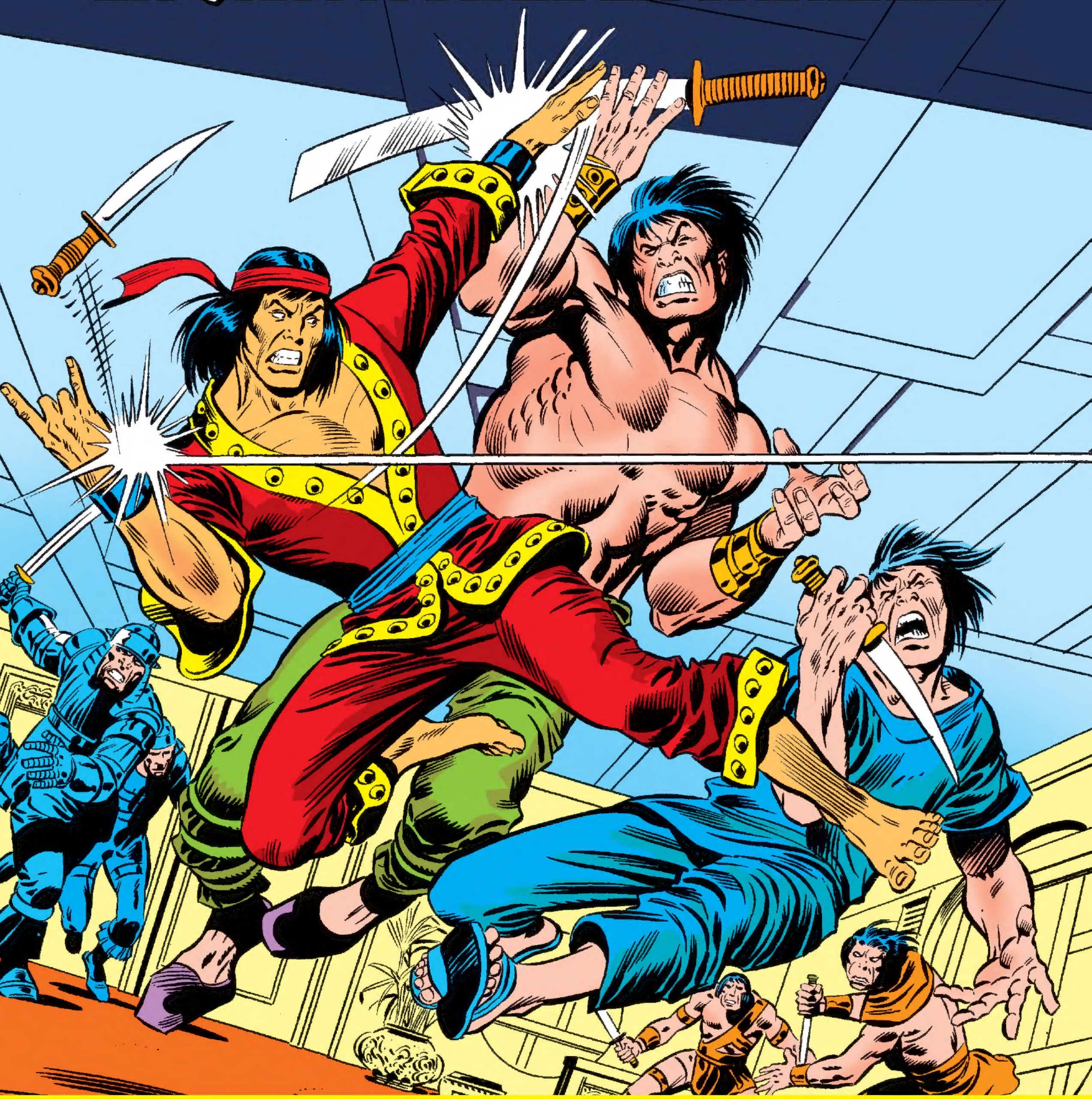

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